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CURRENT COMMENT.

THE conference on the limitation of armaments is at last over and done with. It lasted longer than we thought it would, and we believe that good stage-management would have brought the curtain down before the spectators lost interest and began to file out. This week we are printing only a few words of comment on one phase of the agreement to scrap some battleships, reserving further observations for the future. The conferees are all busy congratulating themselves at the top of their voices on their success, the newspapers are all having their say and a quiet voice like ours can hardly hope to make itself heard amidst all the ensuing din and clatter. There is no hurry; the treaties must yet be ratified by the Senate, and before that is done we shall have ample time to say our say.

INDEED, if our readers have kept a moderately discriminating eye upon the more intelligent section of the daily press, there is little need that we should say anything. As we intimated last week, we have been very much gratified at observing the quality of support that our major opinions about the conference have been receiving from newspapers whose general policy is unlike our own. We can not say much about the head-lines and editorials, though we are glad to note a distinguished exception in the case of the *New York Times's* editorial page, which has furnished some extremely sane and able comment on the conference. The general run of correspondence in the metropolitan papers, however, has quite taken the wind out of our sails. Indeed, when we read the correspondence of Mr. Davis in the *Times*, the summing-up of Mr. Merz and Mr. Nevinson in the *World*, we felt like the naïve brother who found himself too drowsy to say his prayers; so he pointed at an illuminated text of the Lord's Prayer that hung on his wall, and popped into bed, saying, "O Lord, them's my sentiments!"

THE best and most realistic commentators on the conference, however, have been the cartoonists, paragraphers and columnists—if one must accept that hideous word. The deliberations of our statesmen have been fair game for them, and the privileges of their position enabled their wisdom to arise and shine in all the glory of its fullness. It is a great thing to be a Wamba or a Dagonet when a conference is sitting. We call particular attention to the exquisite raillery showered upon the new rules for submarine warfare, by the best of columnists,

Mr. H. I. Phillips, in the *Globe* of 4 February. "No submarine shall approach a merchant ship, under any circumstances, without a letter of introduction. . . . It shall be within the right of a merchant-ship skipper, after reading said letter of introduction, to demand the submarine captain's operator's licence, Lamb's Club card, police card, Y.M.C.A. card, etc., before recognizing him. . . . Immediately upon sighting an enemy warship the skipper of a submarine shall order it to stop. In case the warship doesn't stop, the skipper shall write a letter to the house committee of the League of Nations, reporting the warship for ungentlemanly conduct"—and so on. Nothing could be better or more perspicacious.

WITH regard to the pious resolutions on gas-warfare, we observe that a paragrapher in a Southern contemporary remarks with excellent wit and perfect accuracy that they insure us against all poison-gas attacks until the next war. We are reminded that Mr. Will Irwin was reported the other day as saying in a public lecture that during the war the Germans were experimenting with the dissemination of disease-germs and were about to launch a campaign of this peculiarly shocking character when the British went them one better. Having discovered what the Germans were undertaking, the British collected great store and abundance of the germs of anthrax, and served notice that they would scatter these little ministers of peace over the enemy civil population, unless the Germans desisted. Mr. Will Irwin is one of the best of journalists and a wholly responsible person; so, in considering this statement, all one need put against it is the possibility of his being misinformed, which is unlikely. His story shows what the rules of civilized warfare counted for among the men who floor-managed the last war, and it is highly improbable that these men differ in any essential respect from those who will floor-manage the next one. And now, with these few general remarks, we turn to the topic of battleships.

AFTER some months of public and private discussion at Washington, the diplomats representing the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and Japan have proclaimed to a mildly interested world an arrangement whereby these Governments have agreed to allow some of their false teeth to be extracted, and they are making considerable virtue of this act of abnegation. The faithful press, at home and abroad, has acclaimed this decision with a unanimity and enthusiasm that may well lead the unsophisticated to believe that the millennium is at hand. "After Mr. Hughes had presented and explained to the conference the agreement for the limitation of naval armament," says the *New York World* (which used to talk the same way about Mr. Wilson), "he added, with justifiable pride in a great achievement, that 'no more extraordinary or significant treaty had ever been entered into.' This was no vainglorious boast. What Mr. Hughes said is true."

YET before that long-suffering individual, the Unknown Taxpayer, raises his voice in songs of praise to Mr. Hughes and his conference, we are inclined to think that it would be well for him to examine closely the details of the arrangement that has been entered into at Washington and also to await the naval budget for the coming year. For the fiscal year 1921 our naval appropriations were \$764,547,585. For 1914 they were \$143,019,023. If next

year's outgoings for the navy sink to anything within sight of the pre-war level we shall be among the very first to congratulate our excellent neighbour the *World* upon this "extraordinary and significant treaty." On the surface—and in the head-lines—it looks as if a considerable scaling-down of naval armament had been effected. As far as the United States is concerned, the agreement calls for the scrapping of fifteen ships that are now on the effective list, and the abandonment of an additional thirteen listed on our building-programme but still unborn.

WHEN we come to examine the list of honest-to-goodness American ships that are marked down to be scrapped under the Washington programme, we find an extraordinary state of affairs. According to distinguished naval experts a modern battleship becomes obsolete in fifteen years—and we find that *the average age of the fifteen doomed American vessels is sixteen and a half years*. Of these venerable relics two, the "Maine" and the "Missouri," are twenty years old, and no naval man would have the temerity to pretend that either of these senescent hulks would be of the least service in a real battle. Of the others eight were not in commission last July and presumably are not in commission now, and five are second-line vessels rated as obsolete. *In the whole list there is not a single first-line capital ship!* It is fair to assume, we think, that the ships to be abandoned by the Governments of Japan and Great Britain are not more highly effective than those that our Navy Department has chosen for the discard. Two of the Japanese vessels that are listed for the junk heap are, we find, at least twenty years old, and the average of the lot is well over fourteen years. Great Britain's offering is somewhat more youthful, with an average under eleven years, though some of them aged considerably under rough usage at Gallipoli and Jutland.

UNDER the new agreement the United States and Great Britain may maintain a capital-ship tonnage of 525,000 tons each and Japan of 315,000 tons. Early in 1921 our capital-ship displacement, including the recently completed "California" and the nearly completed "Tennessee," was competently estimated at 467,250 tons. Great Britain's tonnage was about 800,000 and Japan's a little over 300,000. It will be recalled that before the conference at Washington the British Admiralty had suspended the building of further capital ships. In an article in the *Scientific American* last November, Mr. J. Bernard Walker gives a comparison of the relative capital-ship tonnage of the three Powers in 1924, figured on the basis of this suspension and of the building-programmes. His figures are as follows:

	Total Displacement	Displacement Efficiency
United States	722,000	554,476
Great Britain.....	548,250	192,484
Japan.....	272,520	195,939

From the above figures it is apparent that only the United States is decreasing its capital-ship tonnage for the immediate future under the agreement.

WITHIN the next few years, according to Mr. Walker, Great Britain would have permitted her displacement-efficiency in capital ships to sink lower than that of Japan. This fact is not without its significance. Many of the highest naval authorities in England and Germany hold that the development of subsea and aerial craft has brought the day of the great battleship to a close, and some of our own students of naval warfare are of the same opinion. Thus while the future of the capital ship is problematical, there is virtually no question about the future of the airplane and the submarine. On the construction of these weapons of the future the diplomats attempted to place no limitation. As far as the United States is concerned, then, the practical results of the treaty seem to be as follows: the saving of part of the cost of thirteen uncompleted ships; the scrapping of fifteen ships, not one of which would be of any more value in a modern naval battle than a Hudson River ferry-boat; a tonnage limitation for capital ships that would keep

our quota below the total contemplated in our extravagant naval building-programme, though it still permits a larger tonnage than we have ever had in our history. Incidentally the agreement keeps our capital-ship tonnage sufficiently low to enable our foremost commercial rival, whose capabilities for spending have been materially impaired of late, still able to match us ship for ship.

It seems a fair guess that the canny Lords of the British Admiralty will be willing to allow the tally of their sea monsters to sink below the allotted quota. The experiences of the late war taught these wide-awake gentlemen several useful lessons about armed leviathans. Mr. Winston Churchill started out gaily in 1914 to blow, as he elegantly expressed it, the German rats out of their holes, but four years later the rats, though of low visibility, were still decidedly frisky. Mr. Churchill also planned, we remember, to smash his way through the Dardanelles, but a couple of submarines soon sent his mighty fleet scuttling for shelter. Doubtless, then, the British delegates were glad to accommodate Mr. Hughes to the extent of gracefully accepting his proposals, which have the effect of bringing our naval programme within limits which they can afford to rival. In this naval treaty the Washington conference has done an effective bit of window-dressing. We fear that in their wonder and admiration the gaping crowds are likely to pass over the dubious quality of the goods within labelled "Siberia" and "China."

MR. MAYNARD KEYNES has lately published a sequel to his famous "Economic Consequences of the Peace" in the form of a small volume which he calls "A Revision of the Treaty." He has some interesting things to say about the Reparation bill for which the victorious Allies are now dunning, at great expense to themselves, a bankrupt Germany. In their claim for reparation the French authorities, according to Mr. Keynes, set an average value of £2275 upon the houses which were destroyed in the war-zone; these, Mr. Keynes points out, "were chiefly peasants' and miners' cottages and the tenements of small country towns"; the furniture and fittings they assessed at £1180 per house, and for the damage done to the agricultural land they asked £260 per acre; all of which even on the most conservative estimate, says Mr. Keynes, is "not less than two or three times the truth." As for the British claim, Mr. Keynes denies the legality of two-thirds of it, which is the amount asked for pensions. We imagine that a good many readers of Mr. Keynes's book on this side of the Atlantic will be inclined to agree with him in his strictures on these far-fetched demands of our late associates; some of us have not yet forgotten the high cost of the trenches and camps occupied by our soldiers in the expensive business of saving civilization in 1917-1918, and the pretty penny it cost us to carry our army to and fro across the Atlantic in British ships.

EVER since Mathias Erzberger accepted for Germany the thirty-four points of Marshal Foch's armistice, it has been a question whether or not the new German "Government of fulfilment" would last long enough to satiate the Allied appetite for reparations, and thus bring about a moderation of the conqueror's demands. So far, the stuffing process seems to have worked pretty well, for signs of nausea are already becoming apparent. On the other hand, the German officials have employed such bunglesome methods in the collection of provender that domestic difficulties are now threatening.

FROM the beginning, the Communists or Spartacists, and the landlords and ex-bureaucrats of the National People's party (the old Conservatives) have been as heartily opposed to the policy of fulfilment as to every other policy of the new Government. This Government has depended for its strength upon the moderates among the workers and the employers, and its whole history is a history of decreasingly successful efforts to conciliate these two groups. The republican Constitution, as framed by the Majority Socialists, the Democrats (old Progressives), and the Christian People's party (old Catholic Centrists)

is a marvel of incomprehensibility, for the reason that it promises all things to all men. The right of private property in goods and land is guaranteed, and at the same time all sorts of schemes for socialization are projected. "The independent middle class in agriculture, manufactures and trade" is promised full protection, and the workers' councils are granted "equal rights" with the employers in the regulation of wages and labour-conditions, "as well as in the entire economic development of the productive forces."

THE failure of the effort to meet all the great expectations of the employers on the one hand, and the employees on the other, is indicated clearly enough in the results of the only election that has been held under the new Constitution, when the vote showed a pronounced drift away from the centre toward the Independent Socialists on the left, and the German People's party (old National Liberals), and the National People's party on the right. For a time, the German People's party, headed by Stinnes and the great industrialists, co-operated with the Government, but according to latest reports, this group has now joined the opposition, at the very moment when the workers on the State railways have defied the Government and tied up the transport-system of the country.

THE immediate cause of this double revolt is the attempt of the Government to finance the reparations-payments with levies on labour and capital. The current phases of this attempt are, first, the effort to eliminate the railway-deficit by reducing the wages of employees; and second, the imposition upon free capital of a forced loan of a billion gold marks. We do not see how the German Government can keep up this sort of thing for very long; nor do we see why it should do so. It has ready to hand an alternative which is suggested in the provision of the new Constitution, that "an increase of value of land arising without the applying of labour or capital to the property is to be made to serve the community as a whole." If a new increase, why not all the old increases, as represented by the economic rent of every foot of land in Germany? If the Government will take its tribute here, it will strike a heavy blow at the land-holding aristocrats who have been from the beginning the bitterest enemies of the revolution; it will meet with no opposition from any employer who is not also a monopolist; and it will so increase the economic power of the workers that they can *take* "industrial democracy," if they want it.

IF faith can remove mountains, then the politician's invincible belief that economic problems can be abolished by legislating against their results ought to accomplish something, even if it be only to prove that the thing can not be done. The latest restatement of this article of political faith is made by Senator Kenyon in his proposed industrial code for the mining-industry—or others. Senator Kenyon sets forth a number of principles which he suggests shall govern the settlement of industrial disputes. His code includes such articles as: the consideration of the public interest in the production and distribution of coal; the fixing of human standards in wages and working-conditions; freedom of operators and workers to organize; recognition of the open shop; forbidding employment of children under sixteen without State permits; and a six-day working-week, with an eight-hour day and punitive overtime for hours worked in excess of the standard work-day.

It is proposed to enforce this code through the medium of "judicial or quasi-judicial tribunals." That is, it is proposed to apply to labour-problems in the coal-industry the methods that have lately been used to "regulate" them in the railway-industry. At the risk of seeming unduly pessimistic, we are bound to admit that this proposal does not exactly inspire us with hope. The Railway Labour Board, if we remember rightly, itself put out a list of principles which sounded pretty well and were highly spoken of by both the railway-unions and the operators. But little has been heard of them since the Board got

down to the real business of settling wage-disputes. Indeed, although the Board has been on the job for some time now it seems quite as far as on the day it took up its duties, from putting the final Q.E.D. after the railway labour-problem. Is there any reason to suppose that a similar board would be any more successful in dealing with the labour-question in the coal-industry?

WHEN it comes to defining the "decent American standard of living" which wages shall be sufficient to maintain, Senator Kenyon quite frankly sets forth a list of desiderata which represents the very minimum human requirements for health, clothing and shelter. Indeed he reckons so closely on the amount needed to feed, clothe and shelter a family that one feels that he should, for safety's sake, have stipulated the exact number of children which each family should be allowed to have. There is no suggestion that wages should be sufficient properly to educate a family or to provide anything more than the simplest kind of pleasures, and a minimum amount at that. Let the more fortunate people who cut coupons or collect rents enjoy a spell of idleness now and then, travel, enjoy expensive plays and concerts, and find what a pleasant place the world is to loaf in. For the workingman, sufficient food, shelter and clothing to insure his mechanical efficiency; and for pleasure an occasional moving picture or a street-car ride. The trouble with this "decent American standard of living" is that it is a standard for man as an industrial machine and not as a human being; and in his preoccupation with this aspect of the workingman, Senator Kenyon is on common ground with Mr. Gompers and other American labour-leaders who are so much absorbed in mechanical problems like wages, hours, and working-conditions, that they apparently never have time to imagine what the world would look like to a labouring-man if he were a free human being, instead of being merely a very small cog in a very large machine.

THAT was a frank and outspoken letter which Major Wheeler-Nicholson sent last week to his Commander-in-Chief in the White House: "I pray the President to curb the power of the clique of officers in control of the regular army. The inefficiency and Prussianism of this clique succeeded in returning several million dissatisfied American soldiers to civil life. By alienating the best elements in the country, it has succeeded in losing the support of the nation for the army and national defence. This same clique is to-day ruining the regular army . . . The Prussian type of officer is assured of advance, the liberal-minded officer is slighted. Anglo-Saxon ideals of justice and fair play are being rapidly replaced by traditions foreign to the American nation." So says the Major, with much more to the same effect, all very bold and brave and true. But with all respect to the gallant Major we believe that he is barking up the wrong tree when he appeals to Mr. Harding "to investigate and institute reforms." The conditions which the Major protests against can not be mended by our amiable President nor by a score of men far abler than he. What is wrong with the American army, or for that matter the army of any country, is not Prussianism but militarism and the only way to abolish militarism is to abolish armies. "Without reform," says Major Wheeler-Nicholson in closing his letter, "the regular army had better be abolished. It is a useless expense to the taxpayer in its present state." We quite agree, and we are not in favour of reform.

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It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE DAY.

THE CONFERENCE-HABIT.

ONE of the most hopeful developments of the post-war period is the growth of the conference-habit among our great statesmen. If it continues to grow, as we trust it will, there is no city in the world of any pretension to beauty and no golf-course of any claim to distinction that may not in a few years become the meeting-place of politicians and special correspondents—the cynosure, for the moment, of all the eyes that scan the daily papers. While waiting for the student who will subject this conference-habit to scientific analysis and interpretation, we may point out one or two of the more obvious advantages that are provided by this method of attacking international, as well as national problems.

Although these diplomatic excursions to Paris, Geneva, Cannes, Washington, Genoa, etc., may run the taxpayer into something more than the expenses of a Cook's tour, the difference between peaceful discussion and warfare, even in the matter of dollars, francs and pounds sterling is noticeable. The greater adaptability of the conference-method is equally striking. Attention may be concentrated successively upon all the points at issue, such as armaments, international law, finance, or economic relationships, with argument instead of passion as the guiding spirit. Even as a means of teaching geography the conference may be preferred to war.

Approval of the method, however, does not necessarily commit one to the results obtained by its use in any particular instance. This paper has not been able to find much merit in the agreements that have been reached by the various conferences that have succeeded one another since the lid of Pandora's box was wrenched off by the conference at Versailles. It is not for their achievements that we look upon these meetings with hope, but rather for their as yet unrealized possibilities, and their incidental but very real educational value.

Even the consistent failure of these international meetings to grapple with fundamental issues may be but the temporary effect of the emotional exhaustion that follows the strenuous business of making war. As the talk goes on, whether on the banks of the Seine or the Potomac or by the blue waters of the Mediterranean, it becomes clearer and clearer that every subject of discussion leads to the central question, How can men and women engaged in the struggle for existence avoid conflict? Almost anyone will admit that the problem can be solved only by the way of justice; but self-interest is not yet sufficiently enlightened to permit an unprejudiced definition of what justice is.

Judged solely by group-intelligence, the quickest way to arrive at prosperity seems to be to increase the price of the things we sell, and to decrease the price of the things we buy. So the farmer appeals to a benevolent Government to protect him from foreign competition, and to assure him reasonable freight-rates and an abundance of cheap labour, though it is plain that such policies would inevitably result in higher living-costs and a reduced purchasing-power for consumers of farm-products. Our dependence on agriculture was compressed into an aphorism by Quesnay when he said: "Poor peasants, poor kingdom; poor kingdom, poor king." But if it is in the interest of the State to have a flourishing agriculture, the prosperity of the farmer depends largely upon the effective demand of the non-farming population, not to mention the con-

sumers of wheat and cotton and hides all over the world. Farmers are, indeed, the least likely of any of us to find consolation in President Harding's remarks about the dignity of the occupation and his approval of "a scientific limitation of production." It would be more to the point to discover why the exports of the leading countries fell off so rapidly during 1921, our own shipments to Europe alone being two billion dollars less than in 1920. It can not be for lack of laws designed to protect the home market from the competition of foreign goods and from the irregularities of exchange-rates. The cumulative effect of the restrictive laws enacted in the last few years must have pretty nearly neutralized the advantages that have been derived by commerce from the invention of the steamship and the electric cable. Yet the farmers in conference are all for accelerating the retrograde movement.

A ray of hope in the encircling gloom comes from across our northern border, where the farmers seem to be better instructed in the action of economic laws and more appreciative of the interdependence of all workers. Therefore the programme of the Canadian farmers is headed away from State-control and the policy of special favours; and instead of asking to be protected from competition, they are intent upon the removal of existing monopolies. Conscious of the natural opportunities within their reach, and confident of themselves, they have adopted the Jeffersonian ideal of freedom. They plan to break the hold of the landlord through the public absorption of economic rent, and by the removal of tariff-taxes to place all the industries of the country upon the same unprivileged basis, making it possible to buy, as they themselves must sell, in a market open to the competition of all the world.

The idea of quickening commerce by granting the greatest liberty and by removing taxes, is as old as the eighteenth century. Though neglected, it has not been quite forgotten in this generation, as the truly progressive farmer's movement in Canada shows. In fact its vitality is so great that it is always cropping up again in spite of suppression and neglect; and who knows but that one of these fine days it will find its way into an international conference of government representatives, and bring the discussion within the range of common sense.

THE THINGS THAT ARE ABIDING.

CERTAIN observers are lately beginning to manifest concern at the quiet effectiveness with which the British re-conquest of America is being conducted through the medium of our public schools. Mr. Charles Grant Miller recently sounded the alarm in *Columbia*, in an article showing how in seven textbooks of history recently written or revised, a pro-British version of our Revolutionary history has supplanted the traditional textbook version.

The renegade Benedict Arnold [says Mr. Miller] caused poisoning of the wells in patriotic communities he ravaged; and the same spirit to-day poisons our spring-heads of patriotic inspiration and national morale, through organized propaganda to belittle, falsify, or suppress in the schools the virile principles, vital traditions and noble prestige of the American Republic, because of England's present imperialistic need of our forgetfulness.

It seems to us that this is somewhat overstated. Although we have not seen the textbooks cited by Mr. Miller, we are inclined to think, from his quotations, that they afford considerable proof for his argument; yet we doubt that the historians who wrote them were acting as conscious propagandists for the British Government. Rather, we think that they reflect, as it is

quite natural that they should, the eager hospitality which British propaganda met with in this country during the war-period. Again while some of the "restatements" of Revolutionary history criticized by Mr. Miller may be criticized on the ground of patriotism and "national morale," they could hardly, we think, be successfully attacked from the viewpoint of veracity. Still, when this has been said, it is certainly true that there remains a good deal to support Mr. Miller's case. It is not in the interest of historical truth, for instance, for a historian to imply regret that this country is not now "a great branch of the British Empire." Nor does it contribute much to the science of history, to omit "'yarns' of American history" like the story of Nathan Hale in order to make room for such verities as "The invaders came on like British soldiers, and, like British soldiers they came again and again . . . and offered up their lives for their king."

We are obliged to confess, however, that the chief effect which this exposé of our propagandist-historians produces upon us is not so much indignation at their tampering with our "spring-heads of patriotic inspiration and national morale," as sympathy with the children upon whom this kind of historical teaching is visited—be it from textbooks in the old tradition, or from these subversive texts excoriated by Mr. Miller. As we read his quotations from these new texts we found mingling with our righteous wrath a profound regret that at the very period when children's minds are most impressionable and most easily retain what is taught them, they must be cluttered with so much that is uninteresting and unimportant. Perhaps the memory of our own experience with the study of history had something to do with this impression. The textbooks from which we derived our youthful notions of American history omitted none of the "stirring patriotic incidents" which Mr. Miller laments; and yet we have spent a good deal of time since our emancipation from educational institutions, in forgetting or revising the impressions which we gathered from those texts. This experience has left us sceptical, not only of the textbook method of dealing history out in homœopathic doses, but of the value of teaching at all the kind of thing which passes current among us as history.

What is commonly known as history is mainly the record of political events. It is the story of Governments rather than of peoples; the story of wars, their ostensible reasons, and the generals who figured in them; the story of ruling classes and their quarrels among themselves or with other ruling classes; and of the people mostly in the rôle of the mob, occasionally serving as a foil for the chief actors of the drama, after the fashion of "Coriolanus" or "Julius Caesar." Such, with an occasional chapter on the superficies of social life for a background, is the stuff of which our school histories are usually made; and it is at best sordid and uninspiring material. Technically it is history, to be sure, but it is not the real stuff of history. We do not pretend, of course, to the authority of the historian, but we should say that if one proposes to study the history of a people, the things of real interest are not how many wars it has fought or how gallant its generals have been, or how resourceful its politicians, but what its spirit was, how that spirit manifested itself in the collective life of the nation and, finally, how it has affected other peoples—that is, what it has contributed to civilization. Believing this, we find ourselves in hearty agreement with Dr. James Harvey Robinson whose book, "The Mind in the Making," is reviewed elsewhere in this issue, that all

political figures are equally unimportant and that the people who have really made the world's history have been artists and philosophers, poets and men of science; in short, those who have concerned themselves with "the things that are abiding."

This is not intended to imply that we attach no importance to political history, but simply that we do not consider it important *per se*. Such significance as it has, inheres in its relation to cultural history. The political history of ancient Greece, for instance, has no absolute significance. In itself it is worth no one's knowing. It is significant only when viewed in connexion with the growth and decline of Greek culture. It is not in the least important to be able, say, to give chapter and verse for the rise and progress of Greek imperialism. The important thing is to become aware that with the progress of Greek imperialism, that magnificent national genius which had expressed itself in the arts of Phidias and of Sophocles vanished for ever. The importance of this knowledge, furthermore, lies not in the mere coincidence, but in the causal relation between the two phenomena. Again, if one be aware that Greek culture was based upon an unsound economic order, one may be saved from errors like that of Mr. Mackail, when he says that classical literature died because it could offer to mankind no satisfactory hope of immortality. But it would no doubt be better to fall into such errors than to wade through a voluminous literature of fact and record, for the sake of mere academic correctness. It is not for its academic interest that the study of history, or indeed of any subject, is valuable and appropriate.

The final and valid purpose of the study of history, like any other study, is the promotion of a good, a beautiful and a happy life. If we study the marbles of the Parthenon or the works of the Greek tragedians it is in order that we may, through "knowing the best that has been thought and said in the world" refuse to rest contented with less than the best in our own life. If we interest ourselves in the political events which destroyed Greek culture it should be in order that we may recognize the retarding effect of political influences upon our own cultural life, and seek to escape a similar deterioration. A mere instrumental knowledge of history, in other words, is not worth the pains it takes to get it; the only valuable knowledge of history is formative knowledge. The study of cultural history is formative inasmuch as it helps to promote the humanization of man in contemporary society. The study of political history may also to a degree be formative if it be so directed as clearly to show the relation between politics and the general philosophy of a good and interesting and happy collective life. But the study of political history is rarely, if ever, consciously directed towards this end.

THE PROFESSION OF IAGO.

WHEN Iago set out to destroy Cassio and Othello, he knew it was no use to take half-way measures, tempering his hate with leniency, for he realized that these would gain him no consideration from those involved in his scheme, should a blunder on his part bring him to justice. Relentlessly, therefore, he went to work; sparing none, exercising his craft to the very limit of his power. Not one turn or trick was forgotten, not a fault or virtue of his victims was overlooked. The arch-fiend himself could survey Iago's resourcefulness, plausibility and suavity with authoritative approval. Never for a moment was there danger of his betraying himself, of his victims catching him off his guard. Consummate in his villainy, he yet appeared uniformly to all

the world about him as a gentleman of good breeding and grace. He was safe from all but his wife; only she was in a position to wreck his scheme. Iago knew how difficult a matter it is to get a decent man to make a beast of himself. He appreciated the fact that Othello had much of the savage in him, that the roots of his being were in primitive soil, that he was a specimen, however fine, of jungle growth; yet Iago knew that no commonplace deception, no weak and furtive peddling at untruth, would turn Othello away from Cassio, or cause him to doubt for a moment the integrity of Desdemona. A great lie, an abounding, massive, imposing lie, firmly built and buttressed, was necessary if Iago were to succeed; and Iago lied like a giant bred to the purpose.

The significant feature of Iago's character lies not in his power to work evil so much as in his comprehension of the conditions which circumstances imposed upon the most effective exercise of that power. The genius of Iago was the genius for infinite painstaking. It is expressed in his sedulous care, his unending forethought in collecting evidence and data in support of his lie, and in his unerring choice of the very most competent method of using the material. Iago has received scant tribute from his critics, who, as a rule, see only the evil he wrought—that which anyone can see. His unique achievement has received nothing like the recognition it deserves. His purpose required him to embark on a campaign of wholesale corruption, an enterprise of turning human beings into beasts. This does not in itself distinguish him. That he could unerringly forecast all the difficulties of that campaign, however, and provide against them—this was the mark of his genius, and it is for this that he deserves an effigy in the ante-room of every Foreign Office in the world.

It is easy to construct a lie that will deceive some people, perhaps many people, for the spirit of romance is strong in the race; but it is not easy to construct a lie that will deceive everybody. A lie that bears all the marks of truth, that will not show shoddy on examination by the intelligence of average folks, must be constructed with a skill for which there is no other name but that of genius. No mere amateur can turn that trick with success. Moreover, a lie of that order must be the work of one mind and expressed by one tongue. It is futile, absurd, to imagine that the soundest lie can be maintained in all its pristine Iagian invincibility, if two minds are at work on it and several tongues are rehearsing it. A lie that can pass inspection and come out on the market under guarantee to turn decent men into beasts, must be the work of one professional, scientific practitioner; and we have evidence that in the days of Othello, this fact was recognized.

We, however, live in another age: There are now many more news-organs, more churches, more universities, more libraries, than Europe had when Venice was Queen of the Seas. The occupation of Iago has consequently suffered, and the profession of which he was the most distinguished exponent, probably, since Milton's hero—though its adherents are now as the sands of the sea for multitude—has no master mind to revive its ancient honour and dignity. Perhaps not in the scope of a whole century were so many lies ever invented by so many minds, so many lies told by so many tongues, as in the past seven years; yet not one Iago has been produced. The very groundlings now see through the lies of the greatest statesmen, diplomats and other propagandists of our day. All their work has been bungled hopelessly; they have made a fearful botch of the business. They have gone about

their business of turning decent men into beasts by telling palpable lies, mean, petty, preposterous, inconsistent lies. Their success was slight and temporary; yet what a reflection it is upon the intelligence of men of this period, that they should have had any success at all. It is a humiliating thing to realize that the art of an Iago would have been even for the moment thrown away upon the Othellos of our time, and that a really accomplished artist like Iago would never in the world have risked his skin upon such a mad adventure as that of our modern diplomats and statesmen.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S HOME.

It is in England that most has been heard of that dire malady, the slum. Carlyle thundered, Ruskin preached, Morris exhorted; it remained for Octavia Hill to act, yet her diagnosis was as vague as that of the illustrious trio who sought to save their fellow-countrymen from the flood of banality and mediocrity in which they saw their land being engulfed. Looking about, they perceived the blight of centralized industry falling everywhere like a pall. They saw beauty being crushed by machinery; but their thunderings and exhortations fell on minds that could not conceive of any programme of action. The cause of the trouble was economic, and this of course could not be altered by appeals, however eloquent, to the emotions.

The blight swept on, and the slums of England became world-famous, like English statesmen and English wealth. The growing band of housing-reformers turned to Parliament, with that simple faith which believes in the great glacier known as legislation. Bill followed bill; act followed act; and an intricate and ponderous legislative machinery was created with a host of petty functionaries to see that the rules and regulations were properly observed. Yet instead of getting better, matters continued to grow worse.

At last the war came, and something really had to be done. The war, said everybody, must be won at all costs. Houses, tens of thousands of them, with gardens and lawns, play-spaces and bathrooms, with access to churches and schools, theatres and laundries, clubrooms and gymnasiums, were to spring up everywhere as if by magic. Press and pulpit, platform and Parliament, took up the cry. A "better England" was to come out of the horrors of war. The heroes of the trenches must not come home to live again in the slums from which they had gone forth.

The King, addressing the first Parliament after the armistice, dealt frankly with the housing-question. England had been neglectful, he said, but now she must mend her ways. Again the great glacier was prodded and poked; another bill was ushered in, talked about, committed, and hewn into an act. Any amount of money was to be spent in building houses: the Act said so in plain terms. Towns and cities were to report a housing-programme within a specified time, or else the State itself would take action. Local authorities were to raise money for house-building, by special taxes, which the Government would supplement with more money as it was needed and for a long period of years. The Act was not permissive, like its predecessors; it was, in a large measure, compulsory.

Largely to carry out these plans, a new government department was created, known as the Ministry of Health. Dr. Christopher Addison was put at the head of it, and then England set to work. Housing "schemes" as they were called, began to filter into the Ministry for approval, as a result of the mandates of the Act. There were conferences and conventions, and a host of housing-functionaries roamed the country-

side, discussing the price of land, the size of parlours, the heights of ceilings, the thickness of walls, etc. Meanwhile, however, in those more sequestered places where congregate the genial souls who guide the financial and other destinies of England, there were gloomy whisperings. The special tax of a penny in the pound sterling was likely to run for a good many years, and England was already staggering under its taxes. It was then observed that, while the housing-schemes continued to flow in, the houses for some mysterious reason did not materialize. Two years after the passing of the Act only a bare handful of houses had come into existence. The necessary money could not be found; the cost of building remained high; and the municipalities simply refused to act.

Again the great glacier creaked and groaned, and presently orders began to issue forth for attractive issues of Government Housing-Bonds. A stirring appeal was made to the public, but still the money did not come in, for the wary public knew very well that it could buy other investments which bore a higher rate of interest. It was now plain that the Government's housing-programme was beginning to wobble. The great glacier was pried loose once more, and one fine day the British Government announced that it would pay a handsome sum of money to anybody who would be so kind as to build a house. There was no lure of tax-exemption; it was to be a straight cash-payment, money down when the house was built; provided, of course, that the job was completed within a certain period. Even then, the months dragged by and nothing happened. Dr. Addison was shifted to a new job, and Sir Alfred Mond reigned in his stead; and the hopes of the houseless rose again.

Sir Alfred Mond, himself a technician of no mean order, identified with one of the largest industries in England, promptly set himself to work on the housing-problem. He looked it over thoroughly, scraped off all the old paint, knocked the putty from the holes and cracks, measured and computed it, weighed and analysed it and finally announced that he doubted whether the problem could ever be solved. Really it was an impossible job. The Government's housing-policy had been a mistake from the first, and there was now nothing to be done about it.

That, in effect, is Sir Alfred Mond's opinion; and he is right, for as long as men look upon the earth and the fullness thereof as a basis for levying toll upon human needs, instead of for use by all mankind, it is idle to talk about solving the housing-problem or any other social problem. Even though Sir Alfred may not have studied economics, he doubtless has some knowledge of a thing called rent; and he is likewise familiar with the Sankey report on the condition of the mining-industry, and he probably knows what "royalties" are and what they cost. Again, being a business man, he can not be entirely ignorant of the factor of sabotage which has been systematically practised during recent years in all industries by both employers and employed and can not be dispensed with if the present financial system is to be preserved. Consequently, Sir Alfred can not fail to see that the only thing to do is to change these things. With rent and royalties being continually pyramided as they must be, the time has come when the people of England and of this country simply can not have decent houses to live in. Sir Alfred Mond is merely the spokesman for a Government which is obliged to abandon its housing-problem as a means of averting further raids on its already depleted Treasury, and the long-suffering

masses have no choice but to accept the affliction which through divine wisdom is their lot.

Yet here is victorious England filled with technical ability of the highest order, possessing a tradition of workmanship unsurpassed in all the world, and an industrial equipment of vast potentiality, with her mines full of coal, her pits full of clay, her quarries full of stone, with a million workmen walking the streets, and with the newly-formed Building Guilds ready to build houses better than ever and at less cost, if the Government would only let them—with all this the housing-problem in England can not be solved.

Some day, however, it may be hoped, the people of England and of this country, rendered desperate, will become intelligent enough to regain possession of their lost heritage of natural resources and use these resources for satisfying the needs of men.

DEENA'S DOWRY.

"THEY say you are writing stories of the house. Yes?"

The woman put the question to me with an inquiring tilt to her head, her black, healthy eyes narrowed and her thin lips pursed. I knew her as the woman on the second-floor front, left. There were only she and her husband: she, fat and jolly-looking with short-fingered hands covered with wide, gold rings—some set with stones of many colours. Her husband was a tall, grey-bearded man who always wore a black fur cap in the winter and kept his hands hidden under his cuffs. There were parched puffs of skin under his sombre eyes which he lifted to no one. Somewhere uptown, there were two married daughters, but they had never been seen to visit their parents.

The black eyes regarded me unwaveringly.

"Yes," I said, nodding.

"Well, then, come up to my house and I'll tell you a story."

As I seemed to hesitate, she drew herself up with a shrug of her shoulders. "What can you have to write about the others in the house?" she sneered. "They are all nobodies with nothing."

"Let's go upstairs," I said mechanically.

My hostess viewed herself in the long, wood-framed wall-mirror between the two windows of her front room. She drew in the corners of her mouth and arched her eyebrows as she turned to me. "How old do I look to be?" she demanded sharply.

"Forty." I meant it.

The woman threw back her head from a fat, white neck and laughed. "My oldest grandchild is ten years old—a boy," she said.

"We've never seen him nor any one of our grandchildren," a man's voice added with deep humility. It was the husband of my hostess. He had entered directly after we had seated ourselves.

"Well, who's going to tell this story—you or I?" the woman asked crossly.

For answer, the man seated himself in the furthest corner of the room, his hands in the cuffs of his overcoat, his hat shading the shrivelled puffs under his eyes. I watched those eyes as I listened, for they made a discordant duet with the words.

"What I tell you now, no one else is to hear from you," she enjoined. "This story is for you and not for my neighbours who have nothing at all to tell you. Nothing. I am a woman who gambles," smiling, "not with cards but with business. You don't know that I once owned a silver mine in the West. . . . Yes—I did. And not very far back, for that matter. Soon—two or three weeks—I'll be a boss of a waist-shop. I'm lending my cousin's husband money to buy a shop with. She says whatever he touches turns into dollars. You didn't know I was so rich, did you?"

"It isn't your money. It's your daughter's. It's Deena's dowry," the man interrupted suddenly.

"Yes, but she's in the mad-house on the Island. What's the good of it to her?" the woman answered equably, almost dreamily. "You didn't know I had a daughter on the Island?" She leaned forward and whispered. "Don't you dare tell anyone about her. Nobody knows in the house. They think I have only two daughters—the married ones, uptown. What they don't know, they won't use up their pepper for."

"Why don't you tell her about Deena?" the man demanded.

"What is there to tell? It's better to forget her."

"Well, then I'll tell." The man sighed, as the earth must when a huge boulder is shattered to bits and swept off its breast.

"Deena is our oldest. She began working when she reached up to my hips. She was no higher. She worked in the shop until she was twenty, giving us three-quarters of what she earned and the rest she put away for her dowry. In seven years, she had saved seven hundred dollars for her dowry. But she," indicating with his head his wife, "did not like any of the men Deena picked out. This one was too tall; that one too small; the third one was dirty; the fourth one was stingy; the next one too young and the next one too old. So it went on for three years. Our second daughter went off and got married without waiting for her," he lowered his head in his wife's direction, "and then Deena found a man she wanted very much. He came of good family. He was neither too tall nor too small, not dirty, not stingy, not too old, not too young. True, he was not too rich. But what did that matter. Deena loved him and he loved her. Deena had a thousand dollars now. With that, they were going to open an embroidery-store. That was Deena's trade and he knew something about it too. They were so happy with their plans."

The man closed his eyes, opened them and fixed them on his wife. It was as if his eyes guarded the woman's mouth, while he talked.

"I would see Deena looking in the glass, as she combed her hair. And she combed it for a long time, for he had told her she had the most beautiful hair in the world. And now she combs it—there. They tell me there that she never stops combing it. While the others shriek and tear at themselves, she just sits with closed eyes and combs her hair. She does nothing else—just that. When I come to see her, she opens her eyes and shakes her head and combs her hair. It is still beautiful. Still brown. She," indicating his wife, "never goes to see her."

"What is the use?" the woman asked. "She doesn't know me. Why do you talk so much?"

"I am helping you with your story," the man answered quietly.

"A week before they were to be married, she," indicating the woman at the table, "hears of a silver mine in the West. The man brought bits of silver one time and a silver bar the next. And my wife could not rest until she got Deena's dowry to put in that silver mine. She talked to the girl night and day and day and night. The man got the thousand dollars and we never saw him again."

"But I still have the paper he gave me with the gold seal on it," the woman interposed.

"Deena and the man were ready to marry on the little he had, but my wife said they mustn't. 'Work,' she told them, 'and you'll be married in a style befitting my daughter.' And so Deena and the man kept on working for they did not want to go against her wishes. About that time, our youngest went off and was married. She is happy, with a husband and children in a home of her own. Our second daughter is also happy. Her oldest is already ten—a big boy and his hair is the colour of Deena's."

The man suddenly brought his hands to his eyes. "Deena! Deena!"

The woman did not move. She was looking at her rings.

"The next year, there were strikes and work was not plentiful. The second year was a little better. The next year Deena and her man were planning their marriage a third time, but he died. A death of pain. He was caught in the machine. The next week, they came and took Deena away and now I go to see her once a week. She sits—and combs her hair."

The man dropped his head into his hands, while dry, hacking sobs shook him as the whistling wind shakes a dead tree. I felt myself on my feet. Something had wound itself round my throat and it was choking me. I backed toward the door, my hostess following me with a derisive smile in her black eyes.

"I promised you a story, didn't I?" she called out—but I was already half way down the stairs.

BELLA COHEN.

A GERMAN LOOKS AT THE RHINE.

SCHOPENHAUER says that for every truth there is only a short period between the time when it is combated as a paradox and the time when it is looked down upon as a platitude. It is one of the greatest tragedies in politics that the different stages in this development are reached at different times by different nations. If there is anything that the war or its sequel should have taught us it is surely the lesson that a "national" policy, in the old sense, when every nation led a life of its own, is no longer possible; that the interests of all nations are interdependent. The

idea, of course, was in existence before the war, and at that time it was opposed most violently by the Germans. Now the "blue ribbon" of unwisdom seems to have passed over to the French.

It is strange that the old feeling should be still so strong in France. No doubt millions of people in France have the best intentions, but perhaps their information is not always so complete and so trustworthy as it should be. Zola used to say: *Il faut commencer par savoir pour être juste*. French people hear that Germany can pay but does not want to pay, but do they hear that according to careful medical examination thirty-five per cent of German children in the great towns are dangerously undernourished? They hear that because the Germans are trying to evade their obligations, the unfortunate *senestrés* of the devastated districts are still homeless; but did they hear about the strange proceedings at Chaulnes recently where everything was ready for the German workmen to begin their reconstruction-work, when suddenly the prefect appeared on the scene and "enlightened" the population, with the result that the Germans were refused admittance? They are told about Germany's responsibility for bringing about the world-war; but do they hear anything about Theodor Wolff's recent disclosures in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, from Russian documents, concerning M. Poincaré's fatal attitude at the time when the great storm was first brewing? Again and again they hear, and from their highest officials who ought to know better, that the disarmament of Germany is a mere farce.

In these circumstances it is difficult for feelings of hatred, bitterness and anxiety to abate. This feeling of anxiety especially seems still to be very strong in France. German superiority in population, the idea of German "revenge," the possibility of new weapons being invented, the uncertain attitude of Russia (the great Sphinx in the background), are so many nightmares that disturb a great part of the French nation. They want "securities." That is where the vicious circle sets in. Anxiety leads to measures of oppression; oppression leads to increased hatred; increased hatred augments the anxiety. All this is grist to the militarist mill. It is the old trick of militarism to make a good bargain with real or pretended anxiety. We Germans remember when the militarist parties put up cleverly designed placards in every street till almost the last day of the war, showing the whole of Western Germany, from Aachen to Münster, including the Ruhr district, as one big heap of ruins, with the inscription "Germany's fate in the next war if we do not remain in Belgium." Quite a number of sensible people at the time openly denounced this propaganda as sheer madness. The feeling in France to-day, however, seems to be more widespread. I am told from a most trustworthy source that almost all politicians of weight in France are determined to remain on the left bank of the Rhine even after the official term of the occupation has expired.

Historically considered, this is an extraordinary phenomenon. More than a hundred years after the world had taken hold of the democratic idea that every nationality has the right to exist within its own frontiers; after a century of struggle for the realization of this great principle, a century in which the French nation itself has taken its full share; after a great war the cause of which is to be found to a large extent in the incapacity of an antiquated Government to understand the irresistible strength of this principle with hitherto oppressed and half-civilized races, the French nation, once the protagonist of democracy and liberty, ignores

the existence of these great principles and turns from Wilson to Metternich. What is the reason for this attitude of mind? Perhaps the fact that there is a German-speaking population in Alsace which considers itself to be French, may be of influence. The Rhineland, however, is the heart of Germany, the centre of her greatest traditions. It is sheer infatuation to think that it is possible to take it from her. In the French mind the idea that there are old French sympathies in the Rhineland seems to play an important part. It is true that when the French appeared on Rhenish soil after the great Revolution they were not looked upon as enemies by all sections of the population. It was not perhaps the cream of society that joined the ragged *sansculottes* in the dance around the liberty-trees that were erected in the market-places of Cologne and Mainz; but the great new ideas of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, whose humble representatives they were, possessed an extraordinary fascination for the more progressive elements whose political creed the German poet Seume expressed in the words: "The honest and reasonable man's fatherland is wherever he finds the most of liberty, justice and humanity." How things have changed since then! The only thing that has not changed is the style of the French military proclamations. They still talk about *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.

Militarism has a psychology of its own. The way it woos the soul of the population reminds one of the method of the tyrants in the old tales and legends, who persisted in torturing a beautiful virgin until she promised to marry them, stories of which even the dullest children can not read the beginning without suspecting that all will not end well for the tyrants. In private conversation, it is true, French officials talk of an understanding between the two nations as being the most desirable thing on earth. But, meanwhile, the German population is ruled with a rod of iron. A child growing up in the Rhineland to-day under present circumstances receives impressions of constant humiliations which it is to be feared will take firm root in his mind. In numerous cases his schoolrooms are occupied for military purposes. He is not allowed to sing the national songs. The school lessons are supervised and controlled. In his home the family is crowded together because the best rooms are taken by French officers, their families and their relatives. He sees their pretensions, their style of living, the squandering of public money, and compares it with the situation of his countrymen. He is prematurely initiated into sexual matters which are to be seen on the surface of public life. He travels on the railway in overcrowded cars and notices that other cars are kept empty for the occasional use of a foreign officer; he visits a fair and witnesses the fracas that are customary between overbearing and drunken soldiers and the showmen; he sees the traffic in a great town held up for hours and the streets strewn with sand and hears that these preparations are in honour of the visit of a French Minister; he comes home and finds his father complaining that in order to send a small parcel by post from Düsseldorf to Switzerland, he must apply to the Entente Commission at Ems for a permit, which it takes months to get.

The feeling of bitterness which is created by these things is much increased by the kind of justice that is dealt out to the population by the French military authorities. There exists, for example, a regulation by which every act that serves to diminish the security or to depreciate the dignity of the occupying forces may be punished. It is easy to imagine what this

means. Some time ago a man committed suicide because his house was taken from him and he was turned into the street by the military authorities. The case was mentioned at a political meeting without any comment, and the speaker and the chairman of the meeting were both heavily fined, although the fact and its cause were not contested.

All this the French seem to look upon with a great deal of equanimity which, however, does not show much insight. It is strange that they have not observed the great alteration that has taken place in the Rhineland during the last two years under their eyes. There were no real French sympathies in the Rhineland, it is true, but there was a certain anti-Prussian feeling there that showed itself plainly at the time of the German revolution. Had it been left alone, it might have facilitated a constitutional reconstruction by which the most democratically inclined western provinces of Germany would have obtained a greater amount of autonomy. But one can not rebuild one's house if one must always be on one's guard against a neighbour who only waits for the occasion to appropriate the bricks one is pulling down. So the whole movement for autonomy has come to a standstill, for no political party wants to do anything that might have the appearance of paving the way for French imperialism. There remains only a small group of disreputable individuals who still carry on pro-French propaganda with French money. It is deplorable that a sentiment which is not a sober national feeling but is only a manifestation of chauvinism should be created in the Rhineland in this way. The case is aggravated by the fact that there is not the slightest legal pretext for the French occupation of Düsseldorf, Duisburg and Ruhrort. French politicians again and again complain that the anti-French feeling in Germany is on the increase. It certainly does not decrease. But how could it, with the sword of Brennus constantly before our eyes? If only we could get to know the real France instead of French militarism, which is as like the German militarism that we have just got rid of as one pea is like another.

LEVIN L. SCHUECKING.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ART.

WHAT if all the assumptions on which we have thus far judged art should be—erroneous? What if every system of aesthetics and every criticism should be, not merely wrong here and there, but by their very existence the standing, immemorial misunderstanding of art? In short, what if questions regarding the function and the "meaning" of art simply should not be asked at all, and, in any case, should never be answered? These inquiries have drawn forth and written this edifying essay.

My thesis is that art can be comprehended on one hypothesis only, that this hypothesis concerns the universe, and that, in the history of the universe, it has very seldom been consciously held. The hundred and one philosophers who have constructed theories of art have certainly not held it: their systems of aesthetics are to be found, each killed with an appropriate comment, in the terrifying appendix to Signor Croce's book. Signor Croce made only one error in that almost infallible work; he should finally, as an exercise in impartiality, have sent his own theory to the guillotine, and have become his own executioner. But unfortunately he could not refute himself.

The hypothesis in question is one of two which men can make about existence; and both of them are fundamental, that is to say, one can build a complete

structure upon them—over the abyss. The first, the most common, the most “philosophical,” affirms the Absolute; eternal reason and final prevision. In doing this, it impresses on all things the character of necessity and that of usefulness; for if existence is rational through and through, everything must have its use, and there can not be, in this efficient plan, anything that is superfluous—or free. There can not be play, riches, or delight. Necessity, whether it be philosophical or economic, is a form of poverty; and a final reason, postulating a universe working according to plan, makes all existence poor. It is, in fact, the conception of men who are poor themselves; of thinkers driven so hard by logic that they imagine, when the rules of their game constrain them, it is life itself constraining them; and of moralists so unresourceful that they must create around them on every side duties, duties, and for ever more duties. The Absolute is an attempt to give duties to everything: to geological strata, the jungle, the very stars. All these must work and do nothing else, for the sake of something or other, not themselves, making for logic or perhaps for perfection.

Now this is the conception which all theorists in æsthetics have held. Signor Croce himself, in spite of his marvellous intuition in art, remained faithful to it; and he only formulated his æsthetics as a part of his philosophy. He was not content to say that art is expression; he had to show what function art has in thought, and what function thought has in a universe in which he assumes everything has a function. In doing that he submitted art once more to the slavery from which he had freed it. His “*Æsthetics*,” honest as it appears to be, with a sunny Italian honesty, is a dark hypocritical book, for in reading it one can not keep one’s eye on art; one is continually giving an apprehensive glance towards the philosophical system in the background. The particular meanness of philosophy, the meanness of fitting everything into its place, where it has to sit still with folded arms eternally, lies like a damp shadow on that sunny, rarefied and emancipating book.

Everything has its place, all philosophers believe in their hearts; and they begin to construct their systems, and at last try to find what place art has in them. Schopenhauer justified art as a sort of holiday from the terrible urgency of the Will-to-Live: Nietzsche praised it as “the great stimulus to life”; and more mediocre and better-known philosophers have affirmed it because it makes morality “beautiful,” or humanizes that wild animal, man, or even confirms his belief in eternal justice. Now the strange thing is that there is nothing in common between the effects of art upon us when we enjoy it, and those attributed to it by the philosophers. Art delights us precisely because it takes us out of the realm of duty, of reason, and of necessity. It does not moralize or humanize us, nor remind us of eternal justice; it carries us into a world which is neither necessary nor necessitated, but perfectly arbitrary and free; and gives us freely something inconceivably rich and magical, not because we deserve it, nor even because we “need” it, but simply as a final golden superfluous drop to our filled cup. Delight is the feeling which we experience when we receive something great or beautiful without needing it. And art gives us this feeling. Now why, if, as the philosophers claim, its function is to moralize us?

The plainest truth about art is that it is superfluous, and springs out of superfluity: to give it a use one has to strain and falsify not only art but the terms one uses. Another hypothesis altogether is needed, and that hypothesis is one in which excess and superfluity

are conceivable. In the end the presence in the universe of superfluity is only made possible by setting at the ultimate bounds of existence chance, irrationality, folly. Then all things become, as they are, possible. Then freedom is gained perhaps for the first time. This choice, once it is made, commits us to several assumptions. For instance, that there is no connexion whatever between a thing’s necessity—to the “world” or to anything else—and its right to exist. Everything exists as a perfectly unnecessary thing: we ourselves, philosophies, literatures and States as well as butterflies and planets: it is only after they have come into existence that we make them into necessities. We are not entitled to condemn anything because it has no function; on the contrary, to be without a function is to be free, to be rich. The greatest things have been done by men who have had no function: for to do a thing freely is to be great. Nations do not attain power by answering continually the treadmill-problems set to them by circumstances, but by doing something else which is not needed, and thus in escaping from necessity. The principle of progress is the principle of superfluity, of spendthrift and immoral inventiveness and abundance. The unnecessary and the inconceivable have been greater friends to man than the necessary and the reasonable. This enigmatical character of art, this ultimate impossibility of making it turn any moral mill, has been noted occasionally in the last two centuries: by Blake, in his affirmation of imagination against reason, an affirmation which it will take centuries and centuries of play to understand; by the advocates of “*l’art pour l’art*,” whose only fault was that, while their theory was true of art, they were not talking of art, but of their own works; by Nietzsche when he forgot his philosophy and spoke as a psychologist and a poet; and by Mr. Clive Bell in his vain and pasty book on art containing as its one gem the theory of “significant form.” The germ of this theory was in Pater’s remark that all art aspires to the condition of music; but Mr. Bell, in claiming audaciously that all that we acknowledge in literature as pure art is one or two lyrics in which the sense is dissolved and lost in form and sound, became for a moment, perhaps out of perversity, profound. He was right. All that men in their hearts finally call art is pure music, pure fantasy. Except intellectually, the greatest thing is to men the most enigmatical thing; that which is meaning and yet has no meaning; what is called magic. The aspiration of art is towards absolute meaninglessness: all the rest is solemn unreality. We comprehend the theme of a long poem only—why should we strive to conceal it?—by an effort of our conscience, as a matter of duty, that is, by inducing in ourselves a mood hostile to the mood of art. It is only the occasional line which we enjoy spontaneously, without effort, in a sort of irrational delight. The whole scheme of Milton’s “*Paradise Lost*,” illuminated so brilliantly recently by Mr. Denis Laurat in his “*La Pensée de Milton*,” is, as art, mere lumber, mere *gaucherie*, however profound it may be intellectually. We do not acknowledge it as art, except by the hypocritical intellect; but do acknowledge as art

the spirits elect

Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off; the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smiled—

or

Ah, sunflower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the traveller’s journey is done—

or

*quand devant notre porte
Les grande pays muets longuement s'étendront.*

or

It neither grew in syke nor ditch
Nor yet in any sheugh;
But at the gates o' Paradise
That birk grew fair enough.

Now we do not seek to read meaning into these: it is what is beyond meaning in them that gives us an irrational delight. The only mistake which Mr. Bell made, indeed, was that he retained "significant form" after he had invented it. As a war-cry this was for a time sufficient, but as a formula it has been bad for artists. For art does not strive for "significant form," but for a form into which we do not wish to read any significance at all. It seeks to become absolutely unnecessary, absolutely delightful: something beyond what is needed by man or God.

The function of criticism, taken so seriously by Arnold half a century ago, and taken so solemnly ever since, is not a great matter: it is to be the fly on the wheel. The question of criticism is really this: Do literary judgments serve any end? Signor Croce demonstrated that you can not judge a work of art. Every work must be judged singly and by itself, he said; and that, of course, meant that it could not be judged at all. The question is whether it need be judged. We *must* have moral judgments, for morality is a matter of conduct, and conduct is a matter of practice, and if in practice we do not succeed in the affair of living, we must die. There must be a recognizable likeness in the actions of people who live in the same continent, or in the same world; they must know where they are: it is literally a matter of life and death to them that they should know where they are. Here we are in the realm of necessity; and valuations have a meaning. But in the realm of the unnecessary, the superfluous, the free—and only what is superfluous is free—values have no longer any meaning. Where there is no need to value it is stupid to value. It is, indeed, a misunderstanding; and criticism has been thus far wrong, not merely here and there, as when Jeffrey made the terrible *faux pas* about Keats; it has been itself the grand, standing misunderstanding of art. It has assumed that works of art must be valued; but they neither must nor can. It has destroyed the proper attitude to art.

Why men should have begun to "value" art at all is a different question; probably they did it out of habit. The process of evaluation has had the same history as almost every other human thing: it began as a necessity, it became a task, and it has become a habit. In the beginning man created values that he might survive; then he valued for the sake of certain things: in Attica for the sake of life, in Judea for the sake of eternal life, at the Renaissance for the domination of the world, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the mastery of society; but even while the great values lived there were men who valued for the sake of valuing. Socrates, that enigmatical and too rational genius, was perhaps among these, along with nine-tenths of the Fathers of the Church, the "scientific" historians against whom Nietzsche made a perfectly uncomprehended point, and the whole band of critics, except Lessing and Goethe, who were discoverers and not judges. All criticism is criticism for criticism's sake. It is a moral habit carried over into art. The proof of its falsity, its histrionism, is that, in spite of incredible industry and even stupidity, it has not been able to establish an æsthetic convention which mankind, or even all the people in one nation, or even the small public in one nation who are interested in art,

will accept. If the moral convention had fared as badly as this we should all long ago have been back among the animals. But then the moral convention is necessary to action, while the æsthetic convention is not necessary to art.

From all this it follows—that criticism should be abolished? On the contrary. It has the same right to exist as every other superfluous thing. Its justification is that it fulfils no use; that it is, like art, expression. But if a thing is not useful it can not be important? This is the great orthodox heresy about the universe which makes it such a dull place to live in. The superfluous things are the important things, the justification of life, the saving grace whereby the useful and the necessary are redeemed. For life also is finally expression, and not task nor instrument.

EDWIN MUIR.

CREATIVE CHILDHOOD.

A book which needs to be written is one dealing with the childhood of authors. It would be not only interesting but instructive, not merely profitable in a general way, but practical in a particular. We might hope, in reading it, to gain some sort of knowledge as to what environment and conditions are the most conducive to the growth of the child's creative faculty. We might even learn how not to strangle this rare faculty in its early years.¹

So a poet wrote recently in the introduction to the work of another poet who happened also to be a child. The words reveal her sense of the rarity and value of the creative gift, and of the stupidity of most educational systems in strangling it. This feeling some modern educators share, but with them the question is less and less one of the childhood of authors, of the occasional gifted individual, and more and more of the creative power of all children.

Is every child creative, or only, as Miss Lowell's words suggest, the future distinguished author or artist? That children as such have distinct creative power is still so new a conception, even to educators, that few of them have as yet shown serious concern over its possible waste. Only with the very recent attempt of some of the modern schools to salvage this individual power of expression have the rest of us become aware of what is being daily lost and crushed out of our children in the grinding educational process. It is lost, moreover, some of us think, not only under the old repressive methods that are now so generally condemned by educators. The more conscientious, the more thorough, sometimes even the more liberal education has been, the more devastating have its results in this direction sometimes appeared to be. A healthy gift may survive repression, heckling, bludgeoning; its appetite may grow by starvation. It sometimes seems as if the worst type of the old-fashioned school, brutal, inchoate, unsatisfactory and unsatisfying, were still less dangerous to the vital, creative spark, than some of the kinder, better intentioned, betwixt-and-between compromises that have partially superseded it.

Such, for example, are the many well-meaning experiments conceived of as softening and broadening the usual barren public-school curriculum and even in some measure designed to liberate childhood: the systems that still predominantly stress (while sugar-coating them) the three R's, baiting them with projects of *no real interest as projects to the child* but that serve as disguises for the teacher's purpose, that still conceive of education as consisting primarily of instruction and imitation. Education, in its earliest form, consisted of the initiation of the young into the rites of the tribe, and this is a conception which time has altered very little. Probably no savage ever imagined that the youth about to be initiated might contribute to these rites in some valuable way, and the idea is scarcely less revolutionary to-day. We have merely achieved a somewhat more complicated scheme of initiation, and in proportion as we are loving and con-

¹ From the introduction to Hilda Conkling's "Poems by a Little Girl," Amy Lowell.

scientious educators we proceed with breathless haste to smother under this accumulation the vital, up-leaping flame of the child's own urge for expression. It is the fact that this process is so often a well-meant and generous endeavour to kindle and feed the child's imagination that gives it so much of its pathos. We are so pitifully anxious that our children shall know "the best that has been thought and said in the world," that they shall not be starved, as perhaps some of us feel we were starved, for contact with art and music and beauty in any form, that we have lost sight of the fact that beauty springs into being warm and alive, that no cold-storage impression of the world's treasures of art and literature can take the place of a genuine creative expression, that appreciation itself must be creative and not merely what too many schools strive to produce, the expression of conventional good taste. It is this attitude that results in so much collecting and cataloguing, in the study of art through Perry Prints, and literature through the memorizing of verses selected by adults as appropriate for children. Granting that selection on some principle is perhaps inevitable, it is still an ironical commentary on our self-assurance that even the poetic expression of childhood is, as a matter of course, the poetry of adults. At the best, in most schools, children learn the lyrics of Robert Louis Stevenson or Walter de la Mare; at the worst, the inanities of Frank Dempster Sherman or the sentimentalities of Field and Riley. In how many do they, for instance, read the poems of Hilda Conkling, or, what is far more important, write their own poems? This is the more curious because anyone can see the humours and incongruities of a child's attempt to write of adult life. But children, at least in writing of grown-up life, generally write seriously, imaginatively and without condescension. Of how much adult writing for and about children can as much be said?

The usual attitude towards children, even among educators, is, in fact, both sentimental and condescending. It is fundamentally distrustful and disrespectful towards the child and deeply respectful to the rites of the tribe. To teach these to the child is still what education conceives to be its chief function. That is why, concerned as it is with the child's welfare, education has learned so little and is in so very small a degree genuinely experimental. The so-called experiments that are indeed continually being made too frequently merely verify or slightly modify foregone conclusions. Sometimes they attempt to soften as much as possible a forcing process that is felt to be essentially cruel and to give children as much liberty and as much pleasure as is consistent with the acquiring of a prescribed amount of a certain kind of knowledge, with examinations and "discipline" and the formation of habits that will still further solidify and entrench the tribal heritage of ideals, taboos and superstitions.

Broadly speaking, most liberal educators seem to represent this stage of reform, a stage which somehow calls to mind a similarity between certain of its aspects and those of prison-reform. Most of the reformers are still convinced of the essential necessity and soundness of the institution. They believe in making it more efficient and practical, more honest, more sanitary, and kinder, even in extreme cases, in allowing its victims a modicum of self-respect and self-government. They recognize that the inmates of educational or penal institutions should not emerge from these into the world they must live in with their initiative wholly destroyed, although they would no doubt agree that their ability to adapt themselves to and find a place in that world was of far greater importance. The modern idea that an education which has to be either so painfully acquired or so softened, distorted and disguised, has little intrinsically to recommend it, and that suggests instead an education based on the tastes, curiosities and desires of the children themselves, and believes that the whole process ought to be an unfolding from within, unhampered rather than directed, is still considered by most educators revolutionary and unsound.

No doubt this limited reform has contributed something to the liberation of childhood. It has given school-child-

dren an improved status, greater freedom of motion, and a certain amount of choice within definite limits. It is responsible, too, for some pleasurable activity and for a colour and charm in the externals of school-life that make a sentimental appeal to adults. It may even be said to have the commendable aim of giving children (within reason) what they like, when what they like is recognized by adults as wholesome and improving. But as for recognizing and respecting the child's contribution to the life and education of the race, its claim is of the slightest.

While, however, the liberalized educational programme proceeds on its way, with projects to stimulate curiosities that do not exist, with the added interest of excursions, organizations, rites and ceremonials carefully planned by adults as appropriate expressions of the childish imagination, while its art-expression rolls around with the regularity of the seasons, producing pictures of Jack-o'-Lanterns in October, red berries and candles in December, red hearts in February and daffodils in March, to the literary accompaniment of compositions on "Something I Did in My Vacation," "Why We Celebrate Thanksgiving" and "A Christmas Story," while various "drives" impart to its pupils ideals of citizenship, here and there revolutionary experiments in education are also being tried. These experiments base themselves fearlessly on the will of the children, regarding it as the chief end of education that they should attain to authentic expression, and standing ready to throw overboard, if necessary, all the preconceived pedagogic notions of the nature and needs of children and to learn from living children what these really are. They are literally schools in which the children teach and the teachers learn, and there are perhaps no institutions on earth so beautifully and passionately concerned with the preservation of human freedom.

That these schools have demonstrated triumphantly how richly and unfailingly the creative spring wells in children, is not, to some of us, their chief justification. The fact that children in these schools, in the modern school at Stelton, for instance, paint and model, write and draw, construct, act and dance, brilliantly, forcefully and originally, that the beauty and vitality of their performance in all these fields is so arresting that even the most jaded and hidebound educators are forced to recognize it, is thrilling and hopeful. Concerned as we are with creative achievement, we can not fail to rejoice in all this; but as believers in human freedom we must look beyond it, and we can not set up our adult recognition of this work as a final test of its value. It is primarily as liberators of children that these new schools are important, and it is possible that their work now meets our approval simply because they have not yet wholly fulfilled their purpose. They may in time give us new forms to which we shall be as ignorantly hostile as we have frequently been to the new expressions of our contemporaries; but if we are really concerned with genuine expression, we can not fail to welcome the restoring to our common life of so powerful and vivifying a current of inspiration.

This education ventures into an uncharted region, cut off for ever from the milestones and signposts, the comfortable props and traditions of the established schools. It can have no goal and no standard save the free development and expression of each child's personality. It is therefore the most daring of modern experiments.

The supporters of the free school will be the first to admit that, as its opponents point out, children so educated will have no "discipline" and no "respect for authority," that "their liberty will be licence"—in other words, their own idea of liberty and not some one's else. They face with equanimity the prospect that these children may grow to maturity without mastering considerable portions of the usual school-curriculum, but that they will grow, create and learn, think, feel, and express, because these are all natural things for unrepressed human beings to do. That they may lose, in so doing, some of the doubtful accumulated wisdom of the past these educators agree, but they have faith in a future enriched by the gifts that free children will bring to it. MARTHA GRUENING.

THE SOUL OF DUBLIN.

DUBLIN idleness is a joyous, story-telling idleness and resembles Goethe's mother, who would encourage her children and all other people just to be themselves, laughing when they laughed and weeping when they wept. That is the Dublin spirit, because of which it is delightful to live there, notwithstanding its tragedies, and that is why its citizens are so keen for a conversation—too gay and witty ever to become tiresome argument—and for the Abbey Theatre, and for the novels of James Stevens, so full of beauty and charm, and for the gruesome works of James Joyce.

Belfast energy, about which they boast so much, has the soul of a stepmother who is quite resolved that there shall be no play among her children but that all men, women and children—even to the unweaned baby—shall think of nothing but dollars. There is little literature in Belfast and no conversation, for I shall not call conversation the colloquial habit of clashing in incessant contention, nor shall I call Belfast jocularly by the name of either wit or humour—it is all a frantic dullness, like their steady passion for money-making.

Between these cities there has gone on for years, and is now at its maximum, a jealousy which never relaxes. Dublin laughs at Belfast and Belfast hates Dublin. The official classes live in Dublin; the law courts are there, and our famous university, with its fine park, in the centre of the city; and the men of intellect and refinement flee from Belfast to live there. There is nothing wonderful in the fact that the men who remain in Belfast so bitterly refuse the new political arrangement which would stamp with an official seal their perpetual submission to the hated city.

Americans sometimes excuse their country's inferiority to Europe in literature and art by claiming that it is because their country is so young, but this is not the reason. America drops behind the other nations in the spiritual gifts as Belfast is inferior to Dublin, because her heart is set on the dollar. The ambitious young American, like the sturdy young Belfast lad, devotes himself to dollar-hunting. It is the weakling in the family and the community who thinks of taking up art and literature. In Dublin dollar-hunting is held in small esteem and commerce is regarded as a sort of ladder which leads down into the slums; whereas in a place like Belfast or New York it is a Jacob's ladder conducting aspirants to the rich man's paradise.

When I turn from the rivalries of these cities I find the dollar playing its sinister part elsewhere in Ireland. Wherever the dollar is of prime importance—among the shopkeepers, for instance, from whose class came my friend Professor Dowden and his allies in Trinity College—every kind of sentiment and ideality fall in estimation, especially the most interesting of all, the ideality of national sentiment.

When Mr. Gladstone brought forward his famous bill for the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish Episcopal Church, Dr. Salmon, who was the great theologian of the Irish Church, as well as a famous mathematician and fellow of Trinity College, said to a friend of mine that "if that bill passed he would not be able to provide for his family," meaning that a bishopric of £4000 a year would not be there for his acceptance. Dr. Salmon was the son of a Cork shopkeeper, and his attitude towards Irish questions was controlled by his personal and family interests; and that has always been the attitude of the Irish Unionists, among the commercial classes. With the landlord-class it was different. These people were our aristocracy and the feudal chiefs in a feudal society, and it was part of their pride and dignity that they should stand up for their own country. From this class came the Parnells, the Grattans, Daniel O'Connell and Isaac Butt and John Redmond, Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Robert Emmett—all were gentlemen and (except O'Connell and Redmond) all were Protestants.

I used often to meet at Professor Dowden's house his Unionist friends. What astonished me then and still

astonishes me to remember was the mental stagnation which befogged their brains. The whole country was alive with expectation and the wonders of fear and hope, but these people remained stagnant; they felt so safe in the arms of England—prudent and Protestant and property-loving England; it was quite unnecessary that they should think that being England's business and duty. While they admired England and gloried in its Empire, they did not mention what was so evident to me, that all this fine strain of heroic feeling was conditional on England supporting their little minority in its struggle against their fellow-countrymen. Their animosity against the Celt was droll in its excess and impotence, and I have no doubt that this animosity is now turned against England who after so many long years of solicitous attention is now leaving them in the lurch. For though these people are all dead, or most of them, they have left, as we know very well, some successors.

John O'Leary, head of the Fenians, whose portrait I painted, was a man whom I often saw. Indeed he stayed in my house for some time, and I can remember that he always said a good word for the Orangemen. He said that they were mad about the Pope and wanted Ireland for themselves, but that all the same they were good Irishmen and, he would add, good rebels. As to the party of Parnell and Redmond he was quite hopeless, believing that Home Rule would never come, until England was entangled in the European War which he believed might arrive any day. And let me add this word in season—O'Leary, sentenced by the English Government to twenty years penal servitude, much as he loved Ireland, did not hate England, and had many English friends who admired him greatly because of his lofty ideality and life of devotion.

I was born in Ulster and spent my boyhood there, and have had many Ulster companions and friends. How well I know the Belfast man in his fierce conviction that he is always right, no matter how often he changes his opinion! I also know Dublin and its citizens and their unsureness—sometimes plaintive, sometimes tragic—that would question everything, and their cynicism; and also, that idleness which is so diligent—idleness, the teeming mother of the arts. Out of that questioning unsureness and busy idleness and cynicism has evolved a soul that believes literature and thought and poetry to be of more value than all the riches of Babylon and of Belfast. That the soul of Dublin should come to New York ought to be the desire of every good American. JOHN BUTLER YEATS.

RUSSIAN FOLK-WISDOM.

THE MARE AND THE SCARECROW.

IN the fall the Muzhik drove his Mare out to the pea-field, to chew some dry stubble, and to breathe some fresh air—drove her out, and went his own way. The Mare was left alone. Now a Mare is just like a woman: alone with herself is like being with boredom. The Mare grew lonesome, looked about her, and behold some one standing, in hat and shirt, waving his sleeves. The Mare asked: "What kind of a body art thou?"

"Who—me? I am the glorious Scarecrow, set up to watch. I wave my sleeves and guard the peas. But at such a time as this, there are neither peas nor thieves. I am quite dying from boredom. I'll surely croak soon."

Now a Mare is just like a woman: her own master is an enemy, but a stranger, even a scarecrow, is sweet. The Mare took pity on the Scarecrow: "Do not pine, little Scarecrow," she said. "Let us make friends. For two years I have had a coin tucked away in my corner; the grey-haired rat is guarding it. I am going to take that coin, buy some oats, scatter all around thee, then thou canst watch to thy heart's content."

No sooner said than done. The Scarecrow grew jolly, began dancing in the wind, flapping his sleeves, putting on threatening airs. But his joy did not last long. A Mare is just like a woman: to-day thou art a tsar to her, and to-morrow—a dog-keeper.

"Thou art," she said, "too deucedly nasty, Scarecrow. Moreover, I am tired of dry stubble, myself. Watch me gobble up those oats."

Not only did the Mare gobble up the oats, but she even kicked down the Scarecrow with her hoof. A Mare is just like a woman: thou art a friend to her as long as she can use thee, but when she no longer needs thee, thou mayest go to the devil.

THE FACTORY-MUZHNIK.

A FACTORY-MUZHNIK had too soft a living, and lost his faith. "There is," said he, "neither God nor Devil. There is only the Machine, and for her must thou toil in thy sweat."

Folks argued with him this way, and that way: he listened to no one. "Never you mind," he said. "I'll get along all right, and what is more—my life will be jollier than yours. Sin is to me a tasty nut, and wine a merriment."

And he drank, and he drank, and he drank himself down to such a state that when he looked at himself, lo, there were black swarms of devils upon him! He shook himself. "In the devil," said he, "I do believe now. But as to God—I don't agree."

Once more he began to live in sin, and he sinned so much and so long that the time came for him to die. Around him gathered the devils, awaiting his end. The Muzhik heard one devil say: "Soon he'll be ready, then we'll get him."

Another one said: "Such a one 'tis easy to get, he's a godless Muzhik."

A third one said: "Lo, yesterday a neighbour died, but that's quite a different story: this is the second day that the shadow of death is upon him, our Boss himself has been fussing around him, and can't get him, nohow. Though he sinned in his measure, he's been confoundedly firm in his faith."

When the Muzhik heard that even the devils had faith in the Lord, he was on the point of repenting, but before he had the time for it he died, and the devils grabbed him.

THE KINLESS DEVIL.

THE Kinless Devil began to ponder: "Wherefore am I not like everybody else?"

And he went up on to the earth to look for kinsfolk—hither, thither, he knew not whither. I'll go, he thought, to the Owl; she is a bird of the night, so she may be of my kin. So the Kinless Devil came to the Owl: "Behold," he said, "I am all here. Art thou not perchance an aunt of mine?"

The Owl spat between his eyes: "Be off," said she, "thou vile blackguard. Though I be of the night, I am not of your kind. I catch mice, but souls I do not destroy."

Then the Kinless Devil thought: Let me go to the Bear, he is fond of warmth, so maybe he is of my kin. So the Devil came to the Bear: "Behold," he said, "I am all here. Perchance, Bear, thou art an uncle of mine?"

How the Bear bristled up: "Get out of here, son of a devil, or I'll rip thy hide off thee. Though I be furry, it is thou who destroyest souls."

Then the Devil thought: I'll go to the Wolf, he is cruel, so he may be of my kin. So he came to the Wolf: "Behold," he said, "I am all here. Perchance thou art a brother of mine?"

How the Wolf gnashed his teeth at him: "Go to the devil," he said, "or I'll tear thee to pieces. I do kill, but souls I do not destroy; the devil is no brother of mine."

Whither could the Devil go, with all the beasts so good? The Kinless One looked about him, and beheld a Muzhik gathering wood. Suppose, he thought, I try him, for the sake of fun. "Howdy," he said, "little Muzhik. Behold, I am all here. Perchance thou art my own father?"

The Muzhik thought and pondered a while, and asked: "What is the matter, art thou a kinless bastard, or what?"

"Kind of," said the Devil.

The Muzhik thought and pondered a while, and asked: "And how about money, Devil; have you got any?"

To which the Kinless One replied: "Of that stuff I've got a mountain full."

How the Muzhik embraced the Devil, and how he bawled: "Sonny, my own little one, though thou be with horns, thou art with money; though thou be with a tail, I'll be a father to thee."

Thus they began to live together.

THE FAT SOW.

STOUT became the Sow—all lard; she could not even squeal. Yet more than ever she desired to play about, so off she went to the doctor. Thus and so, she said. And the doctor ordered her to take the herb-cure. "Grass," said he, "is good against lard." So the Sow began to take the herb-cure; from morning till night she gobbled grass, but the lard only increased.

Again the Sow went to the doctor. Thus and so, she said. And the doctor ordered her to take the water-cure. "The lard," said he, "will be washed down by the water." So the Sow began to drink water, but nothing came of it: she grew even fatter.

Again the Sow went to the doctor. Thus and so, she said. And the doctor ordered her to lie in the sun. "The sun," said he, "will melt the lard off thy flesh." The Sow lay and lay, and became still more stout.

And the Sow went then to the witch-doctor, who told her this: "That thou mayest become well, Sow, neither water for thee, nor grass, nor lounging in the sun, but a knout and a stick, and toil unto sweat. Then, indeed, thy lard will fall off."

THE BEAR AND THE ASPEN CUDGEL.

THE Bear and the Aspen Cudgel that had a voice became fast friends. They went a-hunting together. The Bear fared well: whatever he mauled, the Cudgel would finish with a blow, and the Bear gobbled up. Two years they hunted in this manner; in the third year the Cudgel came to his senses: "I want," says he, "to get my pleasure out of this, too."

"But what is it thou wantest?" asks the Bear.

"That," says the Cudgel, "I don't know myself."

The Cudgel and the Bear pondered over the matter, but could think of nothing—one dunce is as good as two dunces. So they went to take counsel with the Raven. Now the Raven said this: "'Tis not right for the Cudgel to get no pleasure. To kill, and not to enjoy the killing, why, that's all wrong. See, how much belly is given unto the Bear—so mangle, and guzzle, and rejoice. . . ."

As the Aspen Cudgel heard these words, he felt so sad that he split the Bear's pate, and, in doing this, broke himself in two. And so their hunting came to an end.

*Translated by ALEXANDER KAUN.
(To be continued.)*

POETRY.

CHALDEAN SONG.

Low to the river's pitch I tune my lyre
And sing the fire
Of man's brief dream, his ultimate desire
Past dross and dust and tears.

The river seeks the sea. My chords shall sweep
Out to the deep
Where elder worlds shine in a luminous sleep
Unconscious of the years.

Since petals fall, birds fail in midmost flight,
Kings vanish in a night.
Thou too must pass, O Smerdis, my delight!
To future avatars.

Let there be wine and roses red to-day,
O Smerdis! While we may—
Who with the winged years shall drift away—
Let us defy the stars.

FREDERIKA PETERSON JESSUP.

MISCELLANY.

ANDREYEV's last play, "He Who Gets Slapped," recently produced in New York by the Theatre Guild, seems to have aroused an uncomfortable mixture of admiration and irritation in the minds of the professional critics. It is, they tell us, a good play spoiled by the infuriating vagueness of the Russian mind; or again, a bad play with a peculiar quality of badness that somehow catches in the memory and can not simply be dismissed as negligible. This unwilling concession is due, I imagine, to the fact that while "He Who Gets Slapped," is an exceptionally fine piece of philosophic and even dramatic literature, it is not a play at all within the meaning of the critics. Despite Mr. Bernard Shaw's philosophic dialogues, Anglo-Saxon playgoers are still inclined to appraise a play in terms of the Aristotelian tradition. Our minds are irrevocably, if unconsciously, set upon tracing the pattern of conflict, suspense, climax and release. Cornelle may be deader than a doornail, but we still continue to look for unity of some kind in the plays we attend. Mr. Shaw's plays, plotless though they are, satisfy us by a rigid unity of idea or thesis; but Andreyev refuses to be bound at all by the exigencies of our dramatic criteria.

THIS typically Russian refusal is far from being the deliberate adoption of a new art-form; it is, on the contrary, the spontaneous expression in literature of specifically Russian habits of mind and life. In Russian drama, ideas and characters are not cut to fit the plot-pattern, they are not emphasized or subdued, exaggerated or pruned away, in order to suppress the irrelevancies and show up the essentials of action or thesis. There is little pre-judgment of values, little preconception of order in Russian plays, because there is so little of either in the attitude of Russians towards themselves and each other. They are more willing than we are to accept variety, spontaneity, and therefore inconsistency of character. In the play of life, the Anglo-Saxon has a way of casting himself—or being cast—for certain character types and thereafter conforming rigidly to the kind of personality which he supposes himself to possess, or which he believes society expects him to possess. The Russian, on the other hand, will tolerate socially a degree of oddity and extravagant individuality which, in America or England, would condemn its possessor to a hermit's life; and he will subjectively permit himself to follow his possibly divergent tendencies to their logically contradictory extremes. No wonder, then, that Russian plays seem to us to stagger aimless and incoördinate, but divinely drunken, ecstatically unrestrained, from nowhere in particular to nowhere in particular.

SINCE, then, Andreyev denies our desire for law and order and emotional logic, what does he offer instead? Principally, I think, an extraordinarily vivid apperception of human moods and characters. A mind that is free from a distorting preoccupation with social and artistic fitness exposes a peculiarly sensitive perception, a kind of intellectual virginity, to the enthralling variety of life. Andreyev's easy acceptance of variety and incongruity enables him to understand and present the essential individuality, the perfectly differentiate personality of even the slightest of his characters. The ex-ducational lion tamer, whose hopeless and tormenting quest for a great love leads her to perverse emotions about her ferocious pets; the butterfly child, playing on the brink of life, the ancient satyr who, after many lusts, is finally destroyed by love; even the circus-manager and the big, beautiful blockhead with whom both the women fall in love—are all, one feels, far more credible than most of the people whose smooth, planed surfaces one meets in everyday life. True, we do not meet people who behave as these people do in Andreyev's play—we are in America—but we know that people *feel* like behaving like that, even in America! We interpret their humanity by our own. They are projections of our own potentialities and they give us a peculiarly intimate conviction of their reality.

THE humanity of the nameless "He," though clearly recognizable, is merged in a symbol. He embodies the paradox of the Christian and Buddhist mystics who seek to possess all things by renouncing all things, to achieve happiness by release from pride and desire. A false friend has stolen his ideas and his wife, usurping his spiritual and physical paternity, so he casts away his fame and property and seeks to drop his past and his personality like an old glove. He becomes a circus clown without even a name, and hides his own face behind the clown's mask. Since the real world has buffeted him so mercilessly he finds a mystic joy in suffering, and becomes a great success in the play-world by allowing himself to be slapped nineteen times every night. It is evident that Andreyev puts forward this ideal as a serious philosophy and, as such, it is on the whole alien to the Western mind. But however this may be it does not in any way alter the fact that "He Who Gets Slapped" is an illuminating, understandable and lovable fellow-mortal.

I WENT to see "The Deluge" at the Plymouth Theatre the other evening, and reluctantly came to the conclusion that in their production of the play Mr. Arthur Hopkins and Mr. Robert Edmond Jones had felt obliged to make some substantial concessions in order to please the sort of people who used to think that the theatrical version of Sudermann's "The Song of Songs" was a work of art. Thus the bare note of tragedy is made to reverberate not ominously but rather cheerfully for the edification of an audience that above all things wants to be entertained. That the producers' amiable intention really failed of its effect, however, was proved by the fact that the audience laughed when the writer of the play meant to make them shudder. Take, for example, the moment of the saloon-keeper's despair when he realizes that he will never see his wife and children again. He is bursting with a desire to tell of his ambitions for his children, of his desire to give them an education and a career. What does Mr. Frank Allen, the "translator and adapter" do? With no jot or tittle of authority to be found in the original he turns the saloon-keeper and the bar-tender into a pair of low-comedy drunkards. When, therefore, the former talks about his family, it is with maudlin grimaces and drunken gestures. Of course the audience laughs—and presumably Mr. Hopkins is satisfied.

BUT what of Mr. Berger, the Swedish author of the play, whom the New York *Times* calls a Dane? Has a foreign author no rights which an American producer is bound to respect? There ought to be a limit to Americanization. Mr. Berger surely would resent the introduction of lamentable vaudeville "humour" about wives, as he would resent the sentimentality with which the one female character is overlaid in Mr. Hopkins's version. The addition of lines and stage-business, never contemplated by the author, serves to destroy the significance of the woman's relation to the play. Mr. Robert E. Jones seems to have gone down with his collaborator. All three acts of "The Deluge" take place in a bar-room in a town on the Mississippi River. According to Mr. Jones's setting the room is as chaste in its appointments as the smoking-room of a millionaire's yacht. Was it not Walt Whitman who said to the portrait-painter, "Don't prettify me"? Surely, Mr. Jones has prettified Berger. What does the poor Swedish author say in his stage-directions? "A gaudy bar—a large, gorgeous painting—electric fixtures about walls and shelves—red, white and blue electric lights—spittoons—a banjo on the wall, etc." Obviously Mr. Berger knows what a saloon ought to look like, and what they used to look like, but I am afraid that Mr. Jones has forgotten, for there was no spittoon in sight (or at least not from where I was sitting on the left-hand side of the theatre) nor, from that side, was any "large, gorgeous painting" visible, nor any red, white and blue electric lights. What Mr. Jones has given us is something flabby and refined and "prettified" though it is plainly to be seen that the author wanted something rough and vulgar and robust.

JOURNEYMAN.

ART.

FOR FREEDOM IN CRITICISM.

AMONG those terms which are often applied to works of art, there are few so familiar, perhaps, as the words underrated and overrated. To name but a single instance, in the book flippantly entitled "Pot-Boilers," Mr. Clive Bell complains that the excellence of William Morris is vastly exaggerated by Mr. Clutton-Brock. But what, exactly, does criticism of that sort mean? Is it not a mere contending that one's personal rating is necessarily the sole right one, and does not this, in turn, betray a confounding of the sciences with the arts?

The European critic, sojourning in the United States, finds his opinion generally met with an almost servile deference. American people are largely convinced that his verdict is perforce of greater moment than theirs; and they will explain their conviction by modestly assuring the trans-Atlantic visitor that in point of knowledge he surpasses them. Knowledge, however, has little to do with the appreciation of beautiful things, the senses and the emotions being primarily the channel through which works of art win their way. Suppose that a doctor of medicine and a lawyer should go in company to witness a famous surgeon performing an operation. Suppose that the man of law should exclaim that the thing had been exquisitely done, his friend declaring, in antithesis, that sheer bungling had occurred and that the surgeon was therefore unworthy of his repute. It can not be gainsaid that the doctor's opinion in a question of this sort is more valuable than the lawyer's, since it is by knowledge alone that skill in science may be weighed. But give a man a whole series of lessons concerning orchestration, give another abundant teaching concerning the metres employed in poetry; then take the one to hear "Lohengrin," asking the other the while to read "Atalanta in Calydon." Neither will be appreciative simply because of the knowledge he has acquired. His acquaintance with the technique involved may enable him to care for the craft. He may yet be remote from loving the art, a widely different thing.

In many books on some branch of art, notably the vivacious "History of Painting," by Major Haldane Macfall, there is eternal reflection of the idea that a right and a wrong exist in this matter of appreciation. Major Macfall, with those who share his attitude, virtually claims that certain people are open to censure because they are deeply enamoured of this, while others are sadly at fault through their failure to admire that. It is undeniable that there is something common to all fine works of art, this universal element in each presenting a criterion. Pass from the hieratic sculptures of Michelangelo to the lithographs by Goya of bull-fight scenes, thence to the architectural etchings of Meryon, next to the pastorals of François Boucher. These are works quite unlike one another, both as regards the sentiment they express and the vehicle by which that sentiment is stated. Yet all are curiously similar, for with all there is the same air of aristocracy, merely the ratio of that air being what differs. Considerable in Boucher, of tolerable size in Goya, it is in Meryon just perceptible, a mere hint to show the etcher's infinitesimal consanguinity with Michelangelo. Nevertheless, the history of the arts is nothing if not a history of strong personalities. Although with every fine artist of yesterday or to-day, there is clear resemblance to the old masters, his resemblance to them lies greatly in his difference from them. Achieving in given ratio the aristocratic or distinguished air, he has wrought what is marked by an individual note, even as

are the works of his mighty predecessors. Good, by his affinity with the old, he is good by his isolation, setting forth as he does a temperament which has no complete analogue; and here then, in his art, is a creation whose merit is not to be determined by reference to laws, as with science.

True that every art has its scientific side, but with numerous lofty masters ability in science is by no means prominent. Sir Walter Scott's prose is often ungainly, nearly every one of his stories being rich, however, in the distinguished air, as rich in it as the painting of Rubens with his glittering technical skill. Neither Carlyle nor Balzac wrote in a style to be called excellent in the scientific sense, and in much by El Greco the draughtsmanship is a veritable groping, over which it is easy to imagine Hals or Fragonard laughing derisively. But there is hardly a picture by El Greco which is without greatness, hardly a page by Carlyle or Balzac which is destitute in that way; and offering sharp contrast, there is scarcely a single great painting by Couture, rare colourist though he was, scarcely a single great painting by Eugène Fromentin, virtuoso in drawing, modelling, spacing. Manifestly, in works of art, the insignia of aristocracy do not depend principally on technical accomplishment. Be a thing majestic, this is due to majesty in the character and mind of the artist.

It may be further urged that, with the possible exceptions of Botticelli and Raphael, in no high flights is scientific expertness emphasized, in none of such does it constitute a large part of the appeal. It is not Wagner's talent in instrumentation that we think of when we are listening to "Lohengrin," not Michelangelo's glyptic skill that we ponder when we stand before his Pietà. With either master, beauty of form was but a weapon wherewith to make his message doubly trenchant. In "Lohengrin" the fairyland conjured up is what gives the spell. With the Pietà, the harrowing sufferings of the Christ are what enthrall us. Swinburne is the stock symbol for perfect craftsmanship in poetry. Yet how little we feel his mastery in that relation when reading the enchanted opening of "Atalanta." It is with things immeasurably smaller than Wagner's or Michelangelo's or Swinburne's that proficiency in science looms large in the demand. It is the portrait by Mr. Sargent, not that by Velazquez, which loudly asks for homage to the drawing. It is the verse of W. S. Gilbert, not that of Shelley, which requests a tribute to the adroitness in rhyming. No doubt the men who care most zealously for art are likewise those who are most zealous in winning knowledge about it. Nevertheless the critic basing his judgments purely on knowledge or the critic invoking logic exclusively in his appraisals would be in danger of ranking Gilbert above Shelley, Fromentin and Couture above El Greco. He might even show that Scarlatti or Clementi is the peer of Wagner.

If vital works of art are the expression of personality and emotion, it follows that whoso has himself a personality and an emotion approximating kinship with those laid bare in the sonata or the sonnet will be especially moved by this same work. People who are not Russian will occasionally declare that Turgenev is ranked too high by the Russians; people who are not French will occasionally declare that the French accord an unduly exalted place to Boucher. But observe, the estimates thus assailed are not entirely owing to a nationalist spirit, a feeling of pride in the handiwork of a compatriot, just because he is a compatriot. Nearly everything by Boucher is eminently French in accent, and the Frenchman, seeing some typical works by the

master, feels in his own heart a mysterious response which can never be wholly experienced by men who are not of the same race as the painter of lovely pastoral. Similarly for the Russian, there is in Turgenyev's writing, as in Dostoevsky's or Tolstoy's, something with which he has a strange esoteric relationship, not to be felt by any save countrymen of the novelists at issue. Again there are people keenly susceptible to painting who are much fonder of Ingres than of Rembrandt, being influenced by no ethnological force in this preference. If questioned about it, they will usually say that they are by nature more responsive to beauty of line than to beauty of chiaroscuro. But that is only tantamount to saying that they share a taste with Ingres, having, on the other hand, only a slight preoccupation with one of Rembrandt's chief interests.

There have been great painters who have cared deeply for nearly all the other painters who are generally thought fine, Watteau was one of these catholic spirits; and there have been great writers, like Goethe, and Théophile Gautier, and Swinburne, deeply enamoured of nearly all the writings which time has proclaimed excellent. Yet it will be observed on scrutiny that the men who have spent their lives immersed in art and whose knowledge of its scientific aspect can not rationally be challenged, are really those who are most addicted to strongly idiosyncratic tastes. They are those who, refusing to admire to order, have an ardent esteem for various recondite things and discover no more than tediousness in sundry things that are often upheld as merit itself. Hector Berlioz worshipped the verse of Thomas Moore; Delacroix set Byron beside Dante; Weber had no liking for Beethoven; Beardsley could see nothing to admire in Turner, Matthew Arnold hardly anything in Shelley. Edmond de Goncourt was enthusiastically devoted to Watteau at a time when that master was practically unknown, as also were Massinger and Ford and Marlowe when Charles Lamb and Hazlitt began to extol them. In every case it was a spiritual sympathy or the reverse with the object extolled or decried which begot the predilection. For we love that which we understand and understand that which we love. But love is a sentiment not to be implanted by tuition, the scientific side of art being its sole aspect concerning which tuition is possible.

Man is naturally vain and naturally tyrannical. It flatters his vanity to find others in accord with his opinion; and he praises those who flatter him in this way. It maddens his tyrannical instinct to find others refusing to bow before his idols and he blames those who madden him thus. Moreover, this cajoling or exasperating tends to be doubly strong when it has the prestige of being on the printed page, instead of merely spoken. But if art is to be relished through the senses and the emotions, it is egotism of the worst to cry of this or that, that it is overrated, or underrated. There is here no criticism whatsoever, but rather a demand that all people's feelings and temperament should be like unto one's own. Would it not reflect more wisdom to say that the thing is to oneself delightful although most others do not feel it so, or to say that the thing is, to oneself, totally devoid of charm, its wide repute notwithstanding? A great author has said that a virtuous woman is more precious than rubies, something, in short, whose value is far beyond estimating. If it is a fascinating affair to try to appraise works of art, seeking to show wherein they are original, seeking to point out their ratio, in the air of artistocracy, which proclaims them consanguineous with the masterpieces,

is not the fine work of art essentially similar to the virtuous woman? That is something which is not only far beyond rating, but appeals quite differently to different people.

W. G. BLAIKIE-MURDOCH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

A CORRECTION.

SIRS: On page 392 of your issue of 6 January, a mistake was made which I should like to have rectified. It appears that "Arthur Symons has dedicated books and poems to Arno Holz!" a man whose name I never heard of!—But, how delighted I am to read prose by the father of Yeats. I am, etc.,
London, England.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

A REMARKABLE STATEMENT.

SIRS: In the "Catechism of the Social Question" issued by the National Catholic Welfare Council is a paragraph on the single tax followed by these objections to it from the side of economics:

If no one could obtain an income from land-values there would be a tendency towards drifting about the country. Farmers, for example, would be inclined to exhaust their land and then move on to another farm. The two difficulties, land-exhaustion and insecure tenure of land, would exist under the single-tax system.

As this catechism is designed as a textbook for study-groups and may be widely read, would it not be worth your while to answer these objections? I am, etc.,
Watsonville, California.

NELLIE HIGMAN.

THE best way to get an answer to this remarkable statement is to put the case hypothetically to a practical farmer, and ask him what he would do.—EDITORS.

THE EXHIBIT OF NEGRO ART.

SIRS: I was disappointed in reading an article entitled "An Exhibit of Negro Art," in your issue of 25 January, to observe that no mention was made of the place where this exhibition was held. The New York Public Library, 135th Street Branch, had planned this exhibit for months before it was shown, and the library officials backed the effort with work, time and encouragement when it looked, as it often did, too difficult to carry through.

It is true that some public libraries are conservative and hidebound, but the opportunities of the library as a really democratic institution, without regard to race, age, religion or political bias, are boundless, and it deserves praise or blame on this basis. The 135th Street Branch Library is attempting to attain this end by making an intellectual and artistic centre for the Negroes who are its constituents. Not the least of these attempts is the mingling of coloured and white assistants on its staff, all of whom are earnestly seeking to make the library what it should be, an institution of service to the neighbourhood. I am, etc.,
New York City.

A. B. C.

THE WRATH OF MAN.

SIRS: In the editorial, "A Prophecy Unfulfilled," in your issue of 18 January, you make the statement that "our own Civil war has had equally [with the Franco-Prussian on French writers] little effect upon American literature." Yet what American writer has had so potent an influence upon our literature as Walt Whitman? How many poets of the nineteenth century—whether of this country or of Europe—are likely to live longer? Have you forgotten that Whitman said, "Without those three or four years (1862-65) and the experiences they gave, 'Leaves of Grass' would not now be existing?"

I am quite aware that this statement must be reconciled with the fact that some of Whitman's significant work was done before 1860. But I think it must be left to a man himself to declare what influences so fused his thoughts and emotions into a consistent whole that he acquired the courage to put himself before the world as a unity; to say, in effect, "These words of mine represent not fleeting and vagrant moods, but mine ancient wisdom and austere control."

Is this testimony not something for even the most convinced pacifist to ponder over? Heaven knows that only those who have been demoralized by war wish to look forward to more war, even in the distant future. But there is sometimes a precious heritage from even a devastating experience that makes one shrink from the thought of pushing that seemingly evil thing out beyond the bounds of nature. I feel that if we were but sensitive enough we might even now discern vibrations of deeper chords and finer overtones of the

human spirit than were in pulsation before the great war. At least one knows intimately the purging and concentrating effect of it upon some minds.

Again, you say that Homer made great literature out of a "mythical war." How can you know? When I was a child Troy was believed to be a myth. Moreover, the psychology of Homer is against you. The antique world lived too close to reality to make its great literature out of fantasy. Some tremendous experience of body or of spirit stood always in the background. One feels it. Homer seems to me to be inexplicable without war, just as the Hebrew prophets would have been impossible among a people whose highest concerns were "eating and sleeping, love and children, and home and a job and an income."

Personally I do not wish to believe that war is a biological necessity at this stage of evolution. But it seems to me more in accordance with truth and more provocative of a search for a higher stimulus to the spirit of man to admit that, in the past, it has been a searcher of the heart and veins, than so to colour the facts of life and history as to make it appear something that has left only desolation in its wake. The same view might be taken of any event or circumstance that interrupts the even flow of life. Then where would be the struggle of the spirit to triumph over seeming catastrophe, and "in its own bosom" to build the world anew and to "bid the new career commence with clearer sense?" I am, etc.,
East Orange, New Jersey. EMILY S. HAMBLIN.

"DISRUPTIVE NATIONALISM."

SIRS: It is interesting to note that the felicitous phrase "types of purely disruptive nationalism" coined by Lord Allenby for the service of imperialism expresses an idea which other British imperialists have employed when the unity of the Empire seemed to be in danger. Lecky, in his "Democracy and Liberty," says that

Every great Empire is obliged, in the interest of its imperial unity, and in the interest of the public order of the world, to impose an inflexible veto on popular movements in the direction of disintegration, however much it may endeavour to meet local wishes by varying laws and institutions and compromises.

It is easy for the imperialist to see that nationalism is a "disruptive" thing when it is an obstacle in the pathway of exploitation and privilege and that it ought to be squelched "in the interest of the public order of the world."

By the way, doesn't that stuff about "the interest of the public order of the world" have a familiar sound to the citizens of the United States? Haven't we heard the same solemn flapdoodle about Mexico and Haiti and Santo Domingo and our imperial possessions? I am, etc.,
Hanover, New Hampshire. JAMES G. STEVENS.

ATTENTION OF MR. VAN LOON.

SIRS: Apropos the review of Mr. van Loon's "Story of Mankind," by Mr. Lewis Mumford in your issue of 18 January, I am constrained—at the risk of seeming pedantic and captious—to point out a few errors which should be removed from future editions of the book.

If you would know the truth about Napoleon, if you would "feel history" rather than "learn facts," don't go to the many books written about Napoleon, says Mr. van Loon; in fact, "don't read, but wait until you have a chance to hear a good artist sing the song called 'The Two Grenadiers.'" The music was composed by Schubert, an Austrian who saw the Emperor, the enemy of his country, whenever he came to visit his imperial father-in-law. The "Two Grenadiers" is the work of Schumann, who was not an Austrian and who could scarcely have seen the Emperor at all since the composer was born in 1810 and Napoleon was exiled in 1815. The confusion of the two musicians is quite inexcusable, especially since Mr. van Loon regards the composition as such an important one and since the facts are so readily verifiable.

In his admirable chapter on Art, Mr. van Loon says that Beethoven dedicated his Fifth Symphony to Napoleon. It is mysterious that such an error should be made by one whose "earliest recollection of music goes back to an afternoon when my Mother took me to hear nothing less than a Bach fugue. And the mathematical perfection of the great Protestant master influenced me to such an extent that I can not hear the usual hymns of our prayer-meetings without a feeling of intense agony and direct pain." But who that has once heard the Third and Fifth Symphonies can ever forget them or confuse one with the other? The Third, the Eroica, with its heroic, cyclopean first movement, its tragic, almost religious *marcia funebre* and its flight into the skies at the end—the apotheosis of the hero; who can confound that with the perhaps more popular Fifth Symphony whose theme is made

up of the "Fate Knocking at the Door" *motif*? Does not Mr. van Loon, who speaks of his musical intelligence and acute sensitivity and who rightly gives the arts their superior place, remember that Beethoven commented on the news of Napoleon's death with "I have already composed the proper music for that catastrophe," referring to the second movement of the Eroica?

Errors of this kind make the reader distrustful—and, frankly, one does not want to distrust Mr. van Loon; his book is too fine and deserves, in the main, the favourable criticisms it has received. I am, etc.,
New York City. EMILY Z. FRIEDKIN.

LEAVE THEM ALONE WITH THEIR GLORY.

SIRS: The editorial in your issue of 25 January, on "The Propagandists" hits the nail on the head. It applies not only to the Creels and others you have mentioned, but to some who posed as fundamental democrats, as champions of free speech, free press and other forms of freedom, as opponents of militarism and upholders of civil liberty generally until—Mr. Wilson turned about on the question of war. Then they flopped also. Some prominent propagandists actually published articles, trying to show that the United States had been invaded and the entrance of this country into war was therefore an act of defence. They also argued that suppression of freedom was quite proper and in accord with the Constitution, that conscription was a democratic policy and that any one who did not like it, should start a movement to amend the Constitution. They indulged in hysterical nonsense about the grave danger of being annexed to Germany if we had not gone to the help of the Allies. When the Versailles treaty was announced, they again broke into print, to show that this fulfilled in every particular the pledges of the Fourteen Points. The secret sessions held at Versailles, they represented as in no wise violating the pledge of "open covenants openly arrived at." I would ask you to reproduce without comment some of these articles or all of them, did I not know that you have conscientious scruples against infliction of cruel and unusual punishment upon the authors. Still, as you have said, it is notable that these men who spoke so boldly when they knew that opposition was gagged, are very silent now that their misleading declarations can be shown up and are being shown up. I am, etc.,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. DANIEL KIEFER.

BOOKS.

A NEW VIEW OF HISTORY.

WHAT is history? A mass of crimes, follies, and stupidities that had better be forgotten; a storehouse from which every one takes what he needs as suits his purpose; lies that all agree in telling: so said the cynical eighteenth century. Politics which are past and gone, but not forgotten; a revelation of how wealth is produced by the many and monopolized by the few: so said the serious nineteenth century. Dr. James Harvey Robinson has just written a book which discusses the matter from a different point of view. "The Mind in the Making," though a slender volume, is the result of considerable labour and thought, and it is worthy of careful reading by all who are interested in the problems of our day.

Dr. Robinson spent many years in academic seclusion, where he acquired a distinguished reputation as a scholarly historian and inspiring teacher. As professor in Columbia University, he was one of a group of remarkable historians who made that institution the Mecca for students of history from all parts of the country. Many of those who are now turning that ancient study into newer paths were students of Dr. Robinson, notably, Messrs. Carlton Hayes, David S. Muzzey, Preserved Smith, James T. Shotwell, and Lynn Thorndike. Several years ago he left Columbia University. He was not put out, or forced out, or compelled to resign. He left the University with deep regret because he desired to participate in a new educational experiment. Many years of observation had convinced

¹ "The Mind in the Making." James Harvey Robinson. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

him that the existing system of education, from the kindergarten to the university, is evil in its effects upon the students; that it benumbs their thinking powers by forcing upon them obsolete standards and ideals. In order to set an example of better and freer educational methods he led in founding the New School of Social Research, in New York City, an institution of learning *sans* professors, *sans* degrees, *sans* everything that savours of academic organization. The New School was to be simply a means of communion between a body of teachers and a body of students.

Dr. Robinson's knowledge of history is profound and exact. His mind is quick, subtle, suggestive, and urbane. The clarity of his style arises from an artistic temperament that moulds his learning into harmonious forms. Most historians select and use their material, consciously or unconsciously, in the light of an "interpretation of history." If they are conservative, their interpretation is likely to be political; if radical, it is likely to be economic. Dr. Robinson has developed a new interpretation, an intellectual interpretation of history. Perhaps it would be more correct to call it a "point of view" rather than an "interpretation," as it possesses neither the all-sweeping comprehensiveness in outlook nor exclusiveness in motive that are the usual characteristics of an "interpretation." Dr. Robinson's point of view towards history is that the really essential thing about mankind is the mind in the making, and that the really important persons in history are the makers of the human mind; namely, the intellectual class. If, then, one desires to know history, "how man has come to be as he is and to believe as he does," it is essential to study the evolution of the intellectual class, its attitude towards life, its interests, its ideals. From this point of view, Alexander, Cæsar, Solon, Charlemagne, Bismarck, Gladstone, Danton, Washington, Cavour, Napoleon, all are equally unimportant. The really important figures are Plato, Marcus Aurelius, St. Augustine, Darwin, Bacon, Voltaire, Abelard, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, William James and their kind. Abelard's "Yea and Nay," Plato's "Republic," Voltaire's "Philosophical Dictionary," Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," the Rule of St. Benedict, and Darwin's "Origin of Species" are infinitely more significant as historic documents than the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the Domesday Book, the treaty of Verdun, Magna Charta, the Twelve Tables, the Constitution of the United States, or the treaty of Versailles. It naturally follows that freedom of expression is all important in this interpretation of history. An intellectual class that is masked, hidden, or voiceless means "dark ages" for humanity.

"The Mind in the Making," then, is a plea for freedom of expression. Yet no one is less of a propagandist than Dr. Robinson. "I have no reforms to recommend," he writes, "except the liberation of intelligence, which is the first and most essential one." He is a sceptic because scepticism is the frame of mind that is most conducive to intellectual health and to progress of all kinds. The sceptic, the man who views problems with "persistent and ardent detachment," is especially valuable in this day of bitter partisanship, for he is the one person capable both of seeing clearly and of making others see clearly the true nature of ideas and institutions. In my opinion the really great emancipators, those who struck off old chains without at the same time forging new ones, like the Greek philosophers, and Descartes, Erasmus, Bacon, Voltaire, Renan, and Anatole France, all were sceptics. Kant was not a sceptic but a "believer"; he

emancipated the Germans from theology but chained them to the Categorical Imperative. Mankind was no longer to be wrecked on the golden shore of religion, where compassionate hands were outstretched to aid the unfortunate, but on the rocky shore of ethics, where all was bleak and empty. Rousseau too was a believer. He emancipated the French from tyranny, but chained them to romanticism, which has played havoc with them ever since. Not infrequently, as in the case of Ruskin and Mr. H. G. Wells, the believer is like a mountain, labouring prodigiously and producing only an occasional mouse. The noise that he makes meanwhile frightens the weak, lulls the strong, gratifies the sentimental, and exasperates the knowing.

These "believers" are incurably romantic. They do not see that at bottom there are no wicked systems, but only stupid ones. Evils in society arise often innocently and unsuspectedly; later, if they happen to serve the interests of some class, or group, or section, they become respected as hallowed institutions and traditions. Was not this the story of slavery? The sceptic believes that the most important thing in the world is that people should understand the true nature of their institutions, especially their origins. Evils would evaporate if their absurdities and stupidities were clearly seen. Had the average Southerner in 1861, who owned no slaves and who was almost as much under the tyranny of the planter-aristocracy as was the Negro, realized the meaning and implication of State Rights, would he have died so willingly and so bravely for the "Cause"? I doubt it. The sceptic has an abiding faith in salvation through knowledge and laughter. They also serve who only stand and smile at human follies.

The first part of Dr. Robinson's book treats of the various methods of thinking. Most people accept unquestioningly the ideas and conditions of their day because they consider them natural and inevitable. They therefore do not inquire what they really are and how they came to be. The "good" reasons offered in explanation of their existence are seldom if ever the "real" reasons. Dr. Robinson points out how few there are who dare to think as they will and what difficulties are placed in the way of the "very small number of peculiarly restless and adventurous spirits" who are the creators of civilization. The average man has no ideas; he has nothing but prejudices, "the whisperings of the 'voice of the herd.'" Of all the animals, says Dr. Robinson, man alone is capable of civilization, because he alone is capable of perpetuating the knowledge given to the world by creative intelligences.

The second part of the book deals with man's heritage. According to the author the minds of civilized men are made up of four layers: the animal mind, the child mind, the savage mind, and the civilized mind. The last is the most recent and the thinnest layer. Civilization is not only a recent achievement of mankind in general, but every person is born uncivilized and has to be initiated into a state of civilization by his elders. We all have in us the irrationality and brutishness of the animal, the taboos and animistic tendencies of the savage, and the playfulness and peevishness of the baby. "We may, at any moment, find ourselves overtaken with a warm sense of *camaraderie* for any and all of these ancient pals of ours." Because of his heredity, man's natural tendencies are conservative; and "changes have to be forced upon him by hard experience." The progressive is a very recent and very exceptional product. One who is conservative on principle is "a most unmistakably primitive person in his attitude. His only advance beyond the savage

mood lies in the specious reasons he is able to advance for remaining of the same mind." Civilization began with the critical thinking of the Greeks. Their outstanding contributions were a scientific approach to knowledge and, above all else, a sceptical attitude of mind towards all received ideas. No people were so free-minded and so intellectually adventurous as were the Greeks; and for that reason they are eternally modern. Let anyone read Plato and, say, Mr. Gladstone, and he will soon see that it is Mr. Gladstone who is the ancient and Plato the modern.

The primitive reliance upon authority, shaken by the sceptical Greeks, was re-established in the Middle Ages. Dogma in belief and asceticism in conduct were so thoroughly stamped upon mankind that we have not yet rid ourselves of their influence. In religion, dogmatism has lost its hold on many, but in politics and economics it is characteristic of all save a very few. Our present ideals of "purity" in regard to sex are simply a belated heritage from the Middle Ages, when, to quote Dr. Robinson again, "sexual desire appeared as the sign and seal of human abasement."

The struggle to re-establish freedom of thought began with the scientific revolution associated with the names of Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes. Scepticism once more challenged authority. These men and their successors completely changed the face of the world, but not without a long, long fight. It was, as Dr. Robinson says, "a conflict against ignorance, tradition, and vested interests in church and university, with all that preposterous invective and cruel misrepresentation which characterize the fight against new and critical ideas." To-day freedom in the domain of science is triumphant, for no one thinks of suppressing men of science no matter how revolutionary their theories. At one time an Einstein would have been given the freedom of the flames, not the freedom of the city.

Dr. Robinson devotes the last part of his book to a plea for the same freedom of teaching in the social sciences that is at present enjoyed by the natural sciences. It seems that, at one time or another, almost every subject has been considered "dangerous." Once it was the classics—yes, the classics—then history, politics, biology and economics. Just now sociology is the "dangerous" subject, and so badly infected are the sociologists that it is wellnigh impossible to find one—at least an able one—who is not more or less radical in his views. They are all preoccupied with the social question because the great problems of our day are those of an "acquisitive society." A generation freed from the shackles of authority in science naturally desires freedom of research and experiment in the social sciences. But the sociologists are not permitted to enjoy this freedom because, as Dr. Robinson states, the current ideas of man's nature and of his relation to his fellows are ancient, whereas those of astronomy, geology, and biology are modern. He shows how those in power have revived in twentieth-century America the instruments of repression characteristic of the Middle Ages. As in the case of religious heresy, says the author, one is punished to-day because one believes in certain revolutionary *ideas*. Beliefs as well as acts are considered criminal. Our Secret Service imitates the methods of the Inquisition. Radicals are the modern heretics, and they are "deported to Russia if not to hell as of old."

The enemies of freedom of thought to-day are psychologically akin to those of the past. Many believe that they are animated by a passionate love of the institutions that are the objects of attack, but for my part I

believe that they are generally dull, unimaginative, humourless persons who are animated by a hatred of those whom, in their heart of hearts, they envy as their intellectual superiors. Naturally such persons have no sense of discrimination. They confound liberals, radicals, and revolutionists, and assume that they are all equally hostile to the established order. The great tradition of free speech, so long and so painfully established by the English-speaking peoples, has been violated by reactionary ignoramuses, who have run amuck, stabbing at all whom they do not understand.

Dr. Robinson is at one with Mr. H. G. Wells in believing that "human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." Criticism of the present order, no matter how harsh, should be welcomed instead of being suppressed. The spirit of authority and the spirit of tradition are gone or are rapidly going, and every one should frankly recognize this fact. The test of an idea should be not whether it is radical or conservative—as in former days whether it was orthodox or heterodox—but whether it makes a contribution to a clearer understanding of our problems. Only in this way will it be possible to achieve progress without violence and to avoid a heritage of bitterness and hatred.

Rarely in our country does one meet with a temperament like that of Dr. Robinson. His candour, his sweet reasonableness, and his faith in human progress remind one of Mr. Bertrand Russell and Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson. This book, the mature thought of a distinguished scholar, will appeal to many, and especially to those who, to quote Mr. Wells again, are "capable of being aroused to a sense not merely of wickedness but of the danger of systematic self-seeking in a strained, impoverished, and sorely tried world."

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO.

THE MANNER OF MR. MASEFIELD.

AN Indian tribe of Vancouver Island has a quaintly beautiful belief that for a brief space during one unknown night of the year all things are loosed from their moorings to hover in a drowsy glamour. The sea comes up into the land, the houses shift about fluid and gentle, and the sober tyranny of usual things is suspended. No one has ever been known to witness this holiday of nature, for there is no warning of its coming and there is an insidious drowsiness in the air which lulls mortals into an unwilling slumber. Yet were anyone thus to catch things on the turn, he would be greatly blessed with the fulfilment of his prayers.

If I understand Mr. Masefield aright, his eye is set to catch the glamorous twinkles in life. Once caught and nursed in the sympathy of his imagination, they are united with hard and bracing actualities. The spirit of Mr. Masefield is thus ever striving to realize in a strange, picaresque unity the lust of the real and a less tangible longing which he himself is in the habit of spelling Beauty, sometimes Wisdom. This does not mean that he digs so deep into the earth that, sooner or later, he strikes gold. Mr. Masefield is not akin to Mr. Conrad. His interest in life is only surface-deep. Of its intimate texture, his imagination seizes clearly the exposed rim, item on item; of its diffused fire, only such flames as blow out at vent-holes. Thus the beauty that Mr. Masefield fashions out of life comes but rarely or never from an exploration of its recesses. It is rather a beauty caught in certain dazed moments, when the hard exterior of things, stared at rather than stared through, suddenly takes on a glamorous mist that melts away all rigidities and obscures the relief. Re-phrasing one's analysis of Mr. Masefield's æsthetic sensibility from the standpoint of craftsmanship, one may say that it seems to move on from the laying out of isolated, though numerous, points of observation to the application of a patina.

The leap from Mr. Masefield's "real" to Mr. Masefield's "beautiful" does not necessarily deliver him to sentimentality, though it tends to do so. What does result is that it is difficult for Mr. Masefield to convince us of his integrations. Only too often, as in "The Daffodil Fields," do the observed life and its romance separate into strata. If he has given us both the quest of glamour in many of his sonnets, and daubs of crude life, it is not so much because he is securely himself on various unrelated levels as that the kind of imaginative blending which he intuitively craves is a too delicate undertaking. It is an interesting symptom of his sensibility that he runs in his expression to opposite poles. A synthesis such as he demands is possible, but I do not believe that he has often compassed it. Wholly successful is perhaps only "The Tragedy of Nan," which appears to me to be the poet at his best.

"King Cole" is an unconscious exposition of Mr. Masefield's sensibility and method. The Showman and his company, their bedraggled vans, their disappointments and their ambitions, embody the particular kind of reality, jaunty rather than coarse, plain-spoken rather than veracious, which Mr. Masefield likes to single out for his background. King Cole, the eternal piper, incarnates that other, remoter scheme of values which is the romance of the folk. When the Showman's luck had slid from bad to worse,

. . . King Cole

Slipped from the van to head the leading team.
He breathed into his flute his very soul,
A noise like waters in a pebbly stream.

And lo, a marvellous thing, the gouted clay,
Splashed on the wagons and the horses, glowed,
They shone like embers as they trod the road.

The glamorous moment of transmutation has come, the drab world of the ordinary is loosed from its moorings, and for the rest of the narrative the spirit of King Cole reigns once more. The Showman's luck turns, a prince and all the town march out to visit the circus, and when King Cole fades away at the hour of twelve, it is another troupe that he leaves behind him. Blessings have softened the heart of humanity.

The real, the folk-loristic, and the symbolic are skilfully mingled in this most typical of Mr. Masefield's poems. The mingling can not and does not generate the power that grows from a unitary conception, but within its fundamental limitations "King Cole" is a highly successful poem. In it the poet has chosen a theme, a background, and a simple motivation that exactly suit his genius. In no sense does it reflect the spirit of our age. Like most of Mr. Masefield, it is the Chaucer of the Prologue filtered through the Romantic poets. The verse is not as brilliant as the best passages of "Dauber," but it is as warm and as rapid as anything that Mr. Masefield has yet done. Unfortunately it has some of the usual evidences of his too speedy facility.

EDWARD SAPIR.

A SURGEON OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

AMBROISE PARÉ² was a great surgeon of the sixteenth century. His brief writings not only reveal the character of the practice of medicine and surgery of that day, but throw light upon contemporary manners and customs, military measures, war-weapons and the like. This was the epoch of the barber-surgeon, when the "tonorial studio" and surgical dressing-room were presided over by the one craftsman who was both deft chirurgion and tonsorial artist. Tradition makes Paré's father a simple barber, and the young Ambroise was apprenticed to a barber-surgeon in the provinces. Later when he went to Paris he found the profession of medicine divided into three distinct classes sharply arrayed against each other.

There were first the physicians, members of the *Faculté de Médecine*, who lorded it over all others who attempted

to enter the field of medical practice. The second class were the surgeons of the long robe, distinguished by the garment they were authorized to wear. The third class comprised the barber-surgeons who were allowed to practise cupping, leeching and bleeding, so much in vogue in that day for every ill, but who had to be continually repressed from reaching out into other surgical fields, such as wound-dressing, operations and the like. Paré began his Paris life as a barber-surgeon and worked his way up by merit, ambition, industry, and possibly influence at times, against difficulties and despite enemies, to the highest positions possible to medical men in France, and to a niche in the temple of medical history. He was royal surgeon to four kings, Henri II, François II, Charles IX and Henri III. He wrote and published several books, the first at the age of thirty-five, as a young army surgeon, on the methods of treatment of gunshot-wounds, wounds by arrows, darts and spears, and powder burns. A few years later he wrote a small work on anatomy and obstetrics, and still later a book on wounds of the head and an "Anatomie Universelle." At the age of fifty-eight he published a treatise on the plague, small-pox and measles, and four years later a last book entitled "Cinq Livres de Chirurgie," a year after which appeared his chief work on obstetrics and monsters. In 1575 there was an edition of his collected works, and ten years later a fourth edition containing also his "Apology and Journeys." The journeys were in the main undertaken as army surgeon with military expeditions into various parts of France, Italy, Germany and Flanders.

His books reveal him as a great physician, an indefatigable student, a pacifist because of his war-experiences, a discoverer of new means and methods for the alleviation of human suffering, and a man whose goodness of heart and wide charity were equal to his power of mind. He introduced the use of the ligature to stop bleeding in amputations and other operations, at a time when irons heated in charcoal were applied for this purpose by the profession in general. This innovation met with the opposition common to medical men at that time who were governed too much by tradition and precedent and by the authority of ancient medical writers of Greece, Rome and Arabia. Paré with his common sense and sober vision saw much to criticize and contend against in the surgical guidebooks of his day wherein it was taught that migraine should be treated by severing the arteries behind the ears with an incision of two fingers' breadth down to the bone; that certain eye disorders were to be remedied by an incision over the top of the head down to the bone from one temple to the other; and that dislocation of the spinal bones was best reduced by binding a man straight to a ladder and then dropping the ladder down from a tower or roof to the ground! Indeed the book is a revelation not only of the diseases and sufferings but of the tortures of professional treatment which mankind endured for centuries.

Paré is almost a modern in his assaults upon vaunted methods and remedies. What he says about mummy and unicorn's-horn as medicines might well be applied to many well-advertised substitutes in general use to-day. Mummy was a resinous substance supposed to be derived from Egyptian mummies. Unicorn's-horns purported to come from the fabled unicorn. Both substances were highly esteemed and sold at such high prices that only the wealthy patient could obtain them. Naturally like all good things in great demand they were much adulterated. Mummy was made in France at times as a product of the gallows. Ivory from any source was substituted for unicorn's-horn. Paré thought that neither had any value. "We will send the mummy back to Egypt," he said, "and the unicorn to inaccessible deserts."

One can not pass without comment a brief description of one surgical case that has a peculiar modern interest. In his journey to Boulogne he tells of observing a cannon ball passing by two men-at-arms. One of them was thrown to the ground and on rising could stand only with great difficulty. Paré saw the ball, saw that it did not touch the soldier and ascribed the injury to "the wind of the

¹"King Cole." John Masefield. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.75.

²"Life and Times of Ambroise Paré." With a New Translation of his *Apology* and an account of his *Journeys in Divers Places*. Francis R. Packard. New York: Paul B. Hoeber. \$7.50.

ball." This phrase "wind of the ball" was destined to live a long time. It is used in the "Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion" to explain many curious cases of mental and physical disorders, paralysis, loss of speech, deafness, blindness, etc. etc., occurring in our Civil War of the 'sixties, that were due not to actual contact of cannon-balls, but to some inexplicable effect as they passed by, an effect which was then accredited, for want of a better explanation, to "the wind of the ball." In the world-war we knew them as "shell-shock" or war-neuroses, and our knowledge of their causes is now more ample.

Paré, the wise, able and virtuous physician, lived eighty years, gained renown and achieved, as he should, some fortune as a result of a life given to noble endeavour. He owned several houses near the Pont Saint Michel in Paris which he shared with less fortunate friends and relatives and, like all sensible men, a little farm in the country, a vineyard at Meudon, to which he could go for rest from the multitudinous cares of the great city.

Dr. Packard is to be congratulated on his work as editor and translator of this book, and the publisher on his very creditable performance in the way of large print, clear type, excellent illustrations and good paper.

FREDERICK PETERSON.

SHORTER NOTICES.

PRINCESS BIBESCO'S collected impressions remind one of Henry James and Paul Bourget. This does not mean that their author shares either the literary qualities or the defects of these professional chroniclers of the beau-monde. But if one of James's fashionable sensitives or one of Bourget's erotic elegants had stepped out of the rôle of heroine and taken up authorship, she would, one feels, have written a book like "I Have Only Myself to Blame."¹ It is the kind of efflorescence one would expect from an "exquisite sensorium" such as can be cultivated only in the hothouses of the rich—a nosegay of life's littlest ironies cropping up in a bed of love-in-idleness. Breakfast in bed at 11 A. M. is the best possible background for the *femme incomprise*, for it is only in a world sheltered from the crude clamour of alarm clocks, milkmen and janitors that the subtlest janglings of two not-quite-compatible temperaments can make themselves felt. On such a background, the slightest moods, the lightest loves, cast monstrous, intricate shadows. Not that the ironies of gilded lives are necessarily microscopic. The breaking of dreams, the frustration of passions and the death of love, are enough, but in a rococo frame even these look like the passionate posturings of marionettes passing lightly through a series of exquisitely agonizing moments. It is in dealing with miniature emotions that Princess Bibesco is most successful. Indeed, the story of a girl who dresses for the ball just for one ordinary man but, instead of revelling in his company, becomes the success of the evening and is taken down to supper by royalty, so that she comes home frustrate and heart-achy, is as pretty a little human document as one could wish to read; and the book contains several such neat and convincing scraps of microscopy. V. G.

THE sudden appearance of what might be called the South Sea Bubble in the world of best-sellers has been to many people inexplicable. Who could have predicted that the general public would suddenly acquire this avid taste for mild journalistic travel-sketches? Doubtless, like the epidemics of children, the fashion must run its appointed course, though the publication of "The Cruise of the Kawa" may perhaps, after the manner of an astringent tonic, have its healthy influence. "Faery Lands of the South Seas"² is written by two young American army officers. The idea of visiting the Islands came to them, while they were still in France, "with the gradual splendour of a tropical sunrise." Their substantial work is the record of their experiences in that part of the globe where, for the price of a steamship-ticket, a special variety of pseudo-romance may be bought in large quantities. The usual stage-characters and stage-settings are duly presented. There are the reticent and mysterious "outcasts of the Islands," white, brown, and yellow; the egregious traders in copra; the beautiful and complacent native women who have learnt to fill their pretty heads with the tiresome legends of their singularly unimaginative race. These people are met with and engaged in conversation under a painted tropical

sky beneath the glare of which coral reefs, sun-bleached atolls and impenetrable forests dance and quiver. The book, though it sadly lacks distinction and offers no relief from the ordinary reactions of commonplace people on their travels, is pleasantly written. Now and again one's interest is arrested. It is pretty to learn, for instance, that the Pleiades are sometimes called by the natives *Matariki* or "Little Eyes."

LL. P.

In "The Magic Flute,"¹ Mr. Lowes Dickinson has gone into the play-cupboard of the past, pulled out some very ancient puppets, refurbished them anew, and set them moving spiritedly to his own tune. In Tamino's search for Pamina, man's eternal quest of truth, Mr. Dickinson has mapped out in terms of modern thought and with modern vision the course that humanistic minds have always travelled. We may or may not see farther than did Erasmus or Voltaire, but we see differently even when we are looking in the same direction; and it is because Mr. Dickinson has expressed this difference that his little book should live as the Pilgrim's Progress of our age. Keeping to very simple prose and libretto-like rhymes, Mr. Dickinson works out his fantasy quietly, yet with a wealth of imagery and a profundity of thought. His main themes, the struggle, for instance, between Sarastro, who stands for all that is best in mind and spirit, and the Queen of Night, personification of wilful darkness, are as old as time and as perpetual. Their quarrel centres in the possession of Pamina, their child, who, on attaining the age of reason, has gone over to her father and seeks by her beauty to draw to him the youth of the world. The Queen of Night also craves the allegiance of the young, whom she seeks to restore to the primitive sway of chaotic impulse; but she can not win them without Pamina's help; so in order to gain her, she goes to war with Sarastro, enlisting Tamino in her service. It is impossible, within the limits of a short review to cover the whole of Tamino's wanderings, in body and mind, or give a fair idea of the clever way in which Mr. Lowes Dickinson has endowed these old operatic figures with human qualities. B. U. B.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

DOSTOIEVSKY died forty years ago; nevertheless, his widow is still living and has in preparation, we are told, a volume of memoirs of her celebrated husband. Meanwhile the daughter of the novelist, who, with her mother, is apparently living outside of Russia, has chosen to signalize the Dostoevsky centenary with a new biography² of which the materials seem to have been provided by the family tradition. Mlle. Aimée Dostoevsky was eleven years old at the time of her father's death; her personal memories of him are therefore slight. On the other hand, she seems not to have reckoned with Dostoevsky's other biographers or even read very carefully his own published letters. As Mlle. Dostoevsky adores her father, it goes without saying that her book is charming as well as informative. Does it present us with an accurate portrait? One might suppose from reading it that Dostoevsky had led almost as calm and well-regulated a life as Longfellow. There are times when his daughter seems to be afflicted with that last infirmity one expects to find in a Russian, the mild mania of gentility: nowhere in her pages does one catch a glimpse of the "real *muzhik* of Moscow" whom others observed behind the mask of the petty noble. And as for the face of the tragic dreamer, the tortured face that seemed to say, "*Eccovi*, this child has been in hell"—what has become of that? Forty years have apparently erased it from the recollection of those who loved him best.

Mlle. DOSTOIEVSKY says that she has written her book for European and American readers, that it is not to be published in Russia. No doubt this fact has had its influence, an influence of which she is quite unaware, upon her treatment of the subject. Patriotic as she is, she wishes it to be understood that the anarchism of the Russian temperament had no counterpart in her father's life, that he was the true European gentleman who never appeared in dressing-gown and slippers, "which Russians habitually wear for the greater part of the day." To explain this she develops a somewhat fantastic theory of race-heredity. This idea of race-heredity, she says,

¹ "I Have Only Myself to Blame." Elizabeth Bibesco. New York: George H. Doran Co. \$2.00.

² "Faery Lands of the South Sea." James Norman Hall and Charles Bernard Nordhoff. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$4.00.

¹ "The Magic Flute." G. Lowes Dickinson. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

² "Fyodor Dostoevsky." Aimée Dostoevsky. New Haven: Yale University Press. \$4.00.

was unknown in Europe until Count Gobineau "discovered it in Persia"; and she adds that without taking it into account "it is impossible to write a good biography." Unhappily, with the unconscious desire to present his European readers with a Dostoevsky *comme il faut*, she has ridden her theory so hard that her book at times reads like a travesty of Houston Chamberlain.

DOSTOIEVSKY, it appears, was not a Russian at all, he was a Lithuanian; and the Lithuanians are "Normans," the chosen vessels of all the virtues of civilization. "His portraits," says Mlle. Dostoevsky, "always remind me of those of Shakespeare; there is a family likeness between these two Normans." Again: "All writers of Norman blood are distinguished by their profound realism. It was not for nothing that Dostoevsky admired Balzac so heartily." She wishes to explain why Dostoevsky, although an epileptic, came back from Siberia full of youth and courage, while his comrade Durov was broken by the ordeal: "We must, I think, look for this explanation in their nationality. Durov was a Russian; he belonged to a nation still young, which . . . loses courage at the first obstacle. . . . Dostoevsky was a Lithuanian, a scion of a much older race, and had Norman blood in his veins." Dostoevsky, released from prison, wished to go back to Petersburg—a natural enough desire, one might suppose, in a writer who had been exiled for eleven years. His daughter will not have it so: "The nomad intellectuals of Lithuania have this strange peculiarity; they can not live in the country or in the provinces." Again: "Not for nothing did Dostoevsky admire the Gothic beauty of Cologne Cathedral; his own soul was Gothic!" (The Lithuanians, it seems, are also descended from the Teutonic Knights.) Finally, Dostoevsky admired young Englishwomen, whom Russians in general consider "too thin." But there is no mystery in this: "The beauty of young Englishwomen touched some Norman chord in his Lithuanian heart." Who can be surprised if, after pages and pages of this sort of thing, the credulous, the all too credulous Western reader begins to feel that that "queer fellow" Dostoevsky is, after all, much less queer than he has been painted hitherto?

THIS obsession of race pursues Mlle. Dostoevsky wherever she turns. Although she admires Tolstoy she says that he was incapable of understanding the Russian soul. Why? Because Tolstoy was no more a Russian than Dostoevsky; he was a descendant of a German family, and the Germans "always retain their German souls." She tells us further that American writers during the war spoke of the insensibility of the Germans, and that this explains why Tolstoy, the German, felt no pity when the Serbs and Bulgars, blood-brothers of the Russians, were persecuted during the Russo-Turkish war by the Turks. Elsewhere, in order to make it clear why her mother, who was of Swedish descent, was so forbearing with her father (who was not quite perfect) she says: "Now Swedish women have one quality which distinguishes them from all the other women of Europe: they can not criticize their husbands"—a truth which the life of Strindberg at least fails to corroborate. If there were any end to this mania of Mlle. Dostoevsky it would be foolish to dwell upon it so; but the truth is that it crops up on almost every page of her book. One good purpose, at least, it serves. Readers of Dostoevsky's letters must have been puzzled by his somewhat morbid fear, during the years he spent in Europe, of losing touch with Russia; he declares again and again that his Russian impressions are growing dim and that for this reason his material is running out. Mlle. Dostoevsky remarks quite pertinently that Turgenev and Count Alexis Tolstoy spent their whole lives abroad and "remained eternally Russian," adding that her father, who was really a European, knew that he was capable of being absorbed by Europe and that "it was therefore more dangerous for him to go away from Russia." If there is a grain of truth in her theory we have here an interesting exemplification of it.

It stands to reason, however, that an obsession of this kind is not very favourable to an accurate portraiture. In fact, nothing could be more piquant than to read Mlle. Dostoevsky's book in conjunction with her father's letters. On the one side, we have the bourgeois gentleman; on the other, the man who is revealed in the novels. Mlle. Dostoevsky wishes us to understand that until he was thirty-three we "find no woman in the life of Dostoevsky . . . no betrothed, no mistress, not even a flirtation!" To explain this she develops, as we might expect, an elaborate theory about the tardy development of the northern Russian organism. Turn to the letters, *æt. 24*: "All the Minnas, Claras, Mariannas, etc., have got amazingly pretty, but cost a lot of money. Turgenev and Bielinsky lately gave me a talking to about my disorderly way of life." His daughter would have us believe that, in spite of his fear of losing touch with Russia, he greatly enjoyed his years in Europe: "Dostoevsky was not homesick, and felt very comfortable abroad." Glance at the letters, *æt. 45, 46, 47*, "I departed with death in my heart. I had no faith in foreign lands. . . . We left tedious Berlin as soon as we could. . . . In Dresden or another town—everywhere, in foreign lands, I feel like a slice cut from the loaf. . . . Now to end my Baden adventures: we agonized in that hell for seven weeks. . . . Geneva is the essence of tedium . . . detestable . . . A great event, a breath from Russia. . . . The climate of Florence is perhaps even more unfavourable to my health than that of Milan or Vevey. . . . Life abroad becomes more unbearable to me every day." We are to suppose that, along with his Slavophilism, he not only enjoyed Europe but cherished, in contrast to Tolstoy, a profound faith in European culture. While this is more plausible, it has to be reconciled with innumerable remarks like the following: "But if you knew what a deep-drawn repulsion, almost approaching hatred, I have conceived for the whole of Western Europe during these four years." Finally, when we are told that the moral chaos which reigns in his novels because it reigned in Russia was totally alien to his own life, that his sole characteristic traits were those of the faithful husband, the dutiful father, the careful man of affairs, the upright citizen, we ask ourselves why it is that the honest burghers of Bremen, Lyons, Kansas City and Omaha do not produce novels like "The Possessed" and "The Brothers Karamazov." Most of them are as good "Normans" as Dostoevsky.

THE peculiar bias of this book can only be accounted for in two ways: it is evidently partly due to the writer's having uncritically accepted the traditions of her family, and partly to her desire to make friends for Dostoevsky in countries that are at present suspicious of everything authentically Russian. It would be quite unjust to convey the impression, however, that Mlle. Dostoevsky is infected with snobbery or has the least conscious intention of perverting the truth: oddly enough, in spite of these strange twists in her mind, she is almost as ingenuously and candidly "Russian" as her father himself. It thus happens that, aside from her obsessions, her opinions and her judgments, which violate either common sense or the known, accessible and patent facts of Dostoevsky's life, her narrative is most entertaining and sympathetic in every way. The best parts of it are naturally those that deal with her father's family life, in his later and relatively peaceful years, and with his relations with Turgenev and Tolstoy—Turgenev whom he saw too often, and perhaps too suspiciously, and Tolstoy whom he never saw but who spoke of him after his death as "a kinsman, the closest and the dearest, and the one of whom I had most need."

THE Reviewer recommends the following recent books to readers of the *Freeman*:

"Danton," by Louis Madelin, Translated by Lady Mary Loyd. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$5.00.

"Negro Folk Rhymes," by Thomas W. Talley. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.25.

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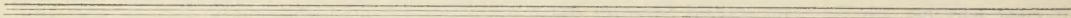
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